



Friendly start — but after six hours of talks between Tariq Aziz, Iraq's foreign minister (left), and James Baker, US Secretary of State, Baghdad had shown no flexibility, according to Mr Baker

## Hint of UN peace role as talks fail

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN GENEVA AND PHILIP JACOBSON IN PARIS

JAMES Baker, the American Secretary of State, emerged last night from six hours of negotiations with Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, to report that Baghdad had shown no flexibility over its five-month occupation of Kuwait.

During the entire session in Geneva, Mr Baker said that "regrettably, I heard nothing today in over six hours on any Iraqi flexibility whatsoever on complying with the UN Security Council resolutions".

In Baghdad, President Saddam Hussein gave a warning to the Americans that their troops would "swim in their own blood" in the event of an attack on Iraq.

The Secretary of State,

reporting gloomily to a press conference at the conclusion of the unexpectedly long talks, said it appeared that only an intervention by Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the United Nations secretary-general, could prevent military action.

There had been many Iraqi miscalculations, "including the international response to the invasion; the barbarous policy of holding hostages... it miscalculated on dividing the international coalition. Let us hope that Iraq does not miscalculate again".

Mr Baker revealed that Mr Aziz declined to accept a letter from President Bush. He said the minister has read it slowly but declined to accept it. He told reporters they would have to ask the Iraqi minister why he had done this. Mr Baker said: "We want a peaceful and political decision."

The letter from Mr Bush said: "Anything less than full compliance with UN security council resolution 678 and its predecessors is unacceptable. There can be no reward for aggression. Nor will there be any negotiation. Principle cannot be compromised. However, by its full compliance, Iraq will gain the opportunity to rejoin the international community. More immediately, Iraq and the Iraqi military establishment will escape destruction. But unless you withdraw from Kuwait completely and without condition, you will lose more than Kuwait."

It declared: "You may be tempted to find solace in the diversity of opinion that is American democracy. You should resist any such temptation. Diversity ought not to be confused with division. Nor should you underestimate, as others have before you, America's will."

Mr Baker, emphasizing that the United States was part of an international coalition, said: "It is not up to us to walk backwards from solemn resolutions of the United Nations. I am sorry we did not receive any indications of flexibility in the position of Iraq."

Within minutes of the news of the failure of the talks, oil prices soared. In New York, Nymex futures rose more than \$6 to \$30 as Mr Baker was speaking, reversing earlier falls on hopes of a peaceful solution. The Dow Jones index on Wall Street, which had

### GULF DIPLOMACY

While James Baker and Tariq Aziz were meeting in Geneva, diplomatic efforts to resolve the Gulf dispute were stepped up around the world:

**PARIS:** The French president said the prolongation of the Geneva talks indicated that Tariq Aziz had put some new ideas on the table but there could be no question of postponing the UN ultimatum to Iraq.

**ALGIERS:** Tariq Aziz was reported by President Mitterrand to have agreed to attend talks in the Algerian capital with European Community countries who may include Italy and the Netherlands.

**MOSCOW:** Tass reported that Mikhail Gorbachev had sent a message to Saddam Hussein "in line with continuing efforts of the Soviet Union towards ensuring a peaceful outcome."

**LONDON:** Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, said in a BBC interview that Britain might make a contribution to any future security system in the Gulf if that turned out to be what was wanted in the area.

been up more than 40 points earlier in the day, was up 2.48 and falling fast at 2511.88.

Earlier in London, the price of oil fell to levels last seen before the invasion of Kuwait, with February Brent down \$4.40 a barrel to \$22.30. Share prices had risen in London on early New York trading. London closed near its best levels of the day. The FT-SE 100 index finished 29.0 up at 2,128.9. The dollar dropped sharply against the pound and the German mark.

Mr Baker, asked about the use of military force, said: "The clock is ticking on." He said that he had not attended the Geneva meeting to threaten Mr Aziz but to inform Iraq that if it chose to continue its occupation of Kuwait it would be faced with a military conflict that it could not win. The United States would welcome any initiative to bring the conflict to an end peacefully. He reminded his listeners that the group facing Iraq was an international coalition, perhaps hinting that hope might lie in a possible French-Algerian peace initiative. Speculation on that initiative increased when the Algerian foreign minister, Sayed Ahmed Ghozali, arrived in Geneva. The Algerians have a solid record of achievement in Middle East diplomacy and are perceived as having "clean hands" by both sides.

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## Major firm on force

FROM ROBIN OAKLEY IN CAIRO

JOHN Major yesterday rejected the idea that the United Nations Security Council should be recalled once more before force is employed to evict President Saddam Hussein from Kuwait.

The prime minister argued that the multinational forces in the Gulf had all the authorisation that they required to attack Saddam if he failed to pull out by next week's deadline.

At a press conference here yesterday, after discussions on the Gulf conflict with President Mubarak of Egypt, he said: "There is no need for it to be referred to the United Nations at all." The original resolutions had been clear when they were tabled and when they were voted upon.

Mr Major is to meet President Mitterrand on Monday to discuss the latest developments in the conflict, amid growing British fears that the French could break ranks on the use of force.

The fears have been fuelled by French involvement in last-minute independent initiatives for peace and by stories that the French are seeking a separate meeting with Saddam.

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## Clarke 'deplores' reading standards

By DAVID TYTLER  
EDUCATION EDITOR

READING standards in too many infant and primary schools in England were "deplorable", Kenneth Clarke, the education secretary, said yesterday. It was up to local education authorities to discover the precise state of reading in their own schools and to put the matter right, he added.

The teaching of reading to seven to 11-year-olds in one in five schools was poor, said a report from the school inspectors, while the National Foundation for Educational Research said that standards had fallen during the late 1980s.

Enquiries were set up last summer by John MacGregor, the previous education secretary, after claims that reading standards had fallen dramatically, and that modern teaching methods were to blame. The school inspectors, who visited 120 schools and drew on the experience of 3,000 others, showed that reading standards were satisfactory or better in 80 per cent of schools.

"That leaves a deplorable figure of 20 per cent where it is less than satisfactory," said Mr Clarke. "I am determined that we should achieve better standards. They are not good enough and we all need to address ourselves to the task of improving them, to bring all schools up to the standards of the best."

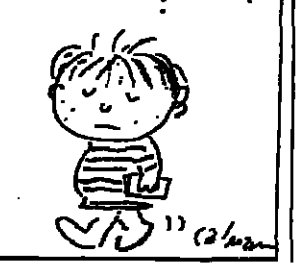
"Reading is the basic skill that children must have to take advantage of all the other education skills that are necessary for a proper and full quality of life."

Mr Clarke said that the inspectors had found that

Continued on page 22, col 3

Standard low, page 3

I read a book once - but it was full of words...



## Troops guard key sites amid Lithuania rallies

FROM BRUCE CLARK IN MOSCOW

LITHUANIA, the first Soviet republic to declare independence, appeared last night to have been singled out for tough treatment by Moscow as the local capital of Vilnius was shaken by rival demonstrations and military manoeuvres.

Six armoured vehicles were deployed for much of the day outside the republic's radio and television station, and troops guarded key positions as pro-independence and anti-independence activists rallied outside the local parliament and held angry public debates.

Lithuania's internal political crisis, which prompted the cabinet to resign on Tuesday night, continued unabated as the former prime minister, Kazimiera Prunskiene, predicted bitterly that her successor would be unable to stay in power for more than three months. In Moscow, a defence ministry spokesman told Tass that several paratroop units had been sent to Lithuania to enforce conscription, and he insisted that no reinforcements had been sent to the other six republics where the Kremlin has pledged to end draft-dodging.

The spokesman, replying to White House charges that the latest Soviet actions could exacerbate political tension, said Monday's pledge to hunt down missing conscripts in

the Baltic republics, Armenia, Georgia, Moldavia and the Ukraine did not necessarily imply the automatic despatch of extra troops to those regions. In regions other than Lithuania, the roundup would in the first instance be carried out by troops already there.

Tass meanwhile denounced the White House spokesman, Martin Fitzwater, for condemning Moscow's decision to send paratroops, saying that his statement "can only be interpreted as an open attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union". The defence minister, Dmitri Yazov, is understood to have told Soviet parliamentarians, meeting in closed session, that three "battalions" of paratroopers, which in the Soviet army would amount to approximately 1,000 men, have been deployed in the Vilnius area.

The Estonian prime minister, Edgar Savisaar, who met Marshal Yazov in Moscow, indicated that he had secured a promise that no extra troops would be sent to his republic at least until Monday.

In what appears to have been a constructive meeting, Kremlin defence chiefs agreed to establish a joint commission with the Estonian authorities to regulate "contentious questions connected with the deployment of

Soviet armed forces in Estonia". Marshal Yazov clearly took a somewhat softer line than the Baltic military commander, who on Monday told all three of the region's governments that extra paratroopers were already on their way.

A delegation from Lithuania is due to meet the defence chiefs today. One of that republic's best-known politicians, Nikolai Medvedev, said yesterday he had warned Marshal Yazov that the territory could rapidly turn into another Northern Ireland. "I told him that any incautious action could lead to the Ustization of Lithuania, because when you drive your opponent underground, he will resort to terrorism," the pro-independence deputy said.

Meanwhile, the parliament of Georgia in the south rejected an ultimatum to withdraw Georgian police from the troubled territory of South Ossetia. It said any attempt by Moscow to remove them by force would be "an effective declaration of war". In another challenge to President Gorbachev, the Russian president, Boris Yeltsin, denounced any use of force to bring rebellious republics to heel.

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### INSIDE

#### Rail crash victim named



The passenger killed in the Cannon Street railway crash in London on Tuesday was Martin Strivens, aged 24, (above) from Orpington, Kent, who had recently been offered a job by a Scandinavian bank in the City. More than 35 passengers injured in the crash were still in hospital yesterday. Page 2

#### Classic surprise

The national commercial alternative to BBC Radio 3 might be able to broadcast Elvis Presley and Buddy Holly music if a definition of "non-pop" as music recorded before 1960, is accepted. Page 2

#### Training worry

Michael Howard, the employment secretary, last night strongly rejected charges that the government's market-led training programme is in danger of collapse because of rising unemployment and a profits squeeze. Page 5

#### Rift healed

Toshiki Kaifu, Japan's prime minister, is expected to announce that Tokyo will stop fingerprinting Korean residents, healing a rift in relations between the two countries. Page 11

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## Commuters vent their anger on Essex police

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

AN ARMY of frustrated British Rail commuters brought a town centre to a standstill in a demonstration of commuter power after their trains were terminated 15 miles from their destination in darkest Essex.

More than a thousand passengers on the notoriously unreliable and antiquated Fenchurch Street line out of London were dumped in the centre of Laindon after gales and rain brought down power lines on the route to Southend.

The outpouring of anger, to which police were called as scuffles occurred, coincided with warnings from psychiatrists yesterday that commuters will be under greater stress than normal

after the Cannon Street train crash. But a British Transport police spokesman attributed said it was a more basic desire by passengers to vent their frustration and go home. Twenty Essex policemen were called out to control traffic which had been brought to a standstill and prevent public disorder as skirmishes broke out.

Passengers using the service, which was condemned by Sir Robert Reid, the retiring British Rail chairman two years ago as "wholly unacceptable", had been trapped on trains for up to three hours before being told to disembark at Laindon.

British Rail promised to lay on special buses, but by 7pm on Tuesday only three had arrived and jostling for

seats led to frayed tempers. Some passengers, who are used to a 90 per cent late arrival rate, tried to stop cars to beg for lifts. A police spokesman said: "Some passengers had been stuck on trains for two to three hours and a potential public order situation began to develop."

"Some of our officers had to face abuse from irate members of the public. After three hours sufficient buses were provided to clear the majority of passengers and the line was reopened. No arrests were made."

A British Rail spokesman said: "People were fighting to get on the buses first. We phoned about eight bus companies but some promised more buses than they actually sent.

We put up posters at Fenchurch Street station and two members of staff were there to explain the situation."

Dr Peter White, a consultant psychiatrist at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London where many of the Cannon Street victims were taken, said: "Commuting is stressful at any time. There is more stress when the train is overcrowded and the longer the journey the greater the stress."

"People will be more stressed after seeing the pictures of the crash. But it would be wrong to assume that what happened on the Fenchurch Street line was a result of the crash."

Crash victim, page 2  
Safety costs, page 12

## Electricity sale set at 60% stake

By MARTIN WALLER

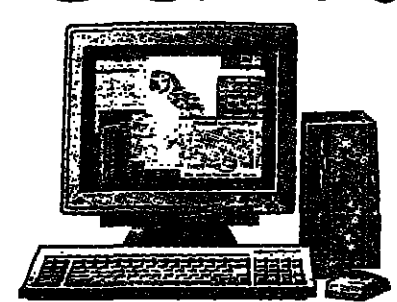
THE government has announced an apparent climb-down in its sale of the two electricity generation companies in England and Wales, due next month, by deciding to float just 60 per cent of them on the stock market and to keep a 40 per cent stake in the two companies for sale in two or more years' time.

The decision will be regretted in the City and the electricity industry, National Power and PowerGen, which have suffered various government-inspired U-turns on their way to the market, want to leave public ownership entirely.

The decision was announced last night on the eve of a £7 million advertising campaign promoting the sale

Full report, page 23  
Minister bites bullet, page 25

# Sun.



## The Sun SPARCstation IPC.

The Wall Street Journal recently ran a news item about workstations, saying that they are only used by scientific and technical people. Implying perhaps that common-or-garden PCs will suffice for us business/financial users.

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# Labour wants £90m subsidy restored to ensure rail safety

By MICHAEL DYNES, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

THE government must abandon plans to abolish Network SouthEast's £90 million subsidy by next year, "and return the money to the cash-starved railway", John Prescott, Labour's transport spokesman, told Malcolm Rifkind, the transport secretary, yesterday.

## Victim of crash is named

THE crash victim was named yesterday as Martin Strivens, aged 24, of Orpington, Kent, a computer programmer whose employers said his death would set back his department's work by six months (Nicholas Watt writes).

Mr Strivens died after severe head and abdominal injuries and a heart attack caused by heavy blood loss. Scandinavian Enskilda Bankers, a bank next to Cannon Street station, sought Mr Strivens out in October to work for the company. Adrian Bennett, administration manager at the bank, said that Mr Strivens might have been a victim of the crash.

He said that when one employee arrived with an injured shoulder the company started to telephone to see who was not at work. "We started eliminating everyone on the list. It was quite early when we realised he was on the train, but for several hours we had no information," he said.

Mr Strivens's brother, Andrew, aged 20, a British Rail guard at Orpington, made repeated attempts to find out what had happened. "I knew it was Martin's train, so I rang the emergency numbers but I just couldn't get through."

Police arrived at about 3pm at the family home to confirm the death of his brother, who lived with Andrew, their parents Pat and Jack and elder brother Duncan.

interests of passenger safety". In British Rail's corporate plan, which was published in 1989 and is due to be updated in the next few months, the government specified that British Rail must improve its financial performance so that all subsidies for Network SouthEast can be eliminated by next year.

Demanding a public enquiry into the Cannon Street accident, Mr Prescott also called on the government to empower the Health and Safety Executive to create a monitoring body to ensure that British Rail adheres to the recommended limits on passenger overcrowding.

Recommendation 60 of the report into the triple-rail crash at Clapham Junction in 1988, by Sir Anthony Hadden, QC, called on British Rail to limit numbers of passengers standing on trains to 10 per cent of seats available. Mr Prescott said there were growing indications that British Rail had failed to honour that recommendation, and there was no independent organisation to monitor its performance.

Mr Rifkind described the talks as useful and constructive, although he is understood to have told Mr Prescott that the subsidy reductions were made possible only because of British Rail's recent productivity and efficiency gains, which were unrelated to investment in improved rail safety.

Industry insiders are that the Inspectorate of Railways will be conducting a public enquiry into the Cannon Street accident under the provision of the Health and Safety at Work Act, rather than a private enquiry under the Railway Regulatory Acts. A decision on the form of the

enquiry rests with Mr Rifkind. Separate enquiries will be conducted by British Transport Police and British Rail.

The report by the Inspector of Railways is unlikely to be completed for two years. The enquiry by the British Transport Police will be to establish whether there are any grounds for a criminal prosecution and will not be published, while British Rail's report could be completed within two weeks. Although human error has still not been ruled out, leaving brake failure as one possible explanation for the crash, rail experts are continuing to speculate about the reasons for the severity of the damage to the commuter train from Sevenoaks.

Richard Hope, editor of *Railway Gazette*, suggested that the type of buffers used at Cannon Street station could have exacerbated the structural damage. Because of the limited space at Cannon Street, British Rail installed hydraulic ram buffers, which offer only three feet of resistance in the face of an oncoming train.

According to Mr Hope, the Goodwin Warren friction buffers used at many other British Rail termini would have caused far less damage. Friction buffers slide along the track in the event of a collision, picking up a series of additional clamps over a distance of between 15 to 25 feet, effectively bringing the train to a gradual rather than an abrupt halt, Mr Hope said.

Structurally weak 1950s rolling stock, the amount of overcrowding, and the numbers of passengers who stood up ready to disembark were still being advanced last night as the primary reasons for the excessively high casualty rate.

## Hydraulic ram buffers

Hydraulic ram buffers are used in stations where space is limited but offer 3ft of resistance on impact...

## Goodwin Warren buffers

... by contrast, Goodwin Warren buffers slide along the rails on impact picking up resistance clamps over a 15-25ft length of rail

# Commuters face 7.58 again

By NICHOLAS WATT

COMMUTERS injured in the Cannon Street rail crash were back on the same train to work yesterday, nervous but determined to beat their fears.

Shane Wheeler, aged 23, a printer from Forest Hill, southeast London, who was badly cut on the head, said: "This morning's journey was traumatic — not just for me, but for everyone else who was on yesterday's train. But you just have to get on and live."

When the 7.58am from Sevenoaks crashed, Mr Wheeler was in the guard's compartment of the first coach, and yesterday he decided to travel in the same place. It was normal, he said, for passengers to travel there when trains were full.

Clive Grindley, aged 55,

who works for a City insurance firm, sat yesterday in the same seat in the fifth coach, which bore the brunt of the impact in Tuesday's crash. He was not worried about taking the train that he has been catching for 18 years. But he was the only member of a "small club" of commuters who meet at Sevenoaks most mornings to catch the 7.58am.

Barry Broughton, aged 51, who sat near him on Tuesday, stayed at home yesterday nursing a sore face. Sophie Crane, aged 18, whose elbows were badly cut on Tuesday, said she had been told by her supervisor that she could have yesterday off work, but she decided to go in on the same train, which was noticeably less crowded, rather than

sit at home just worrying.

John Prescott, Labour's transport spokesman, toured Cannon Street and London Bridge stations yesterday with John Ellis, general manager of BR's southern region. Mr Prescott said that the surge of passengers boarding trains at London Bridge to travel to Cannon Street overloaded trains severely. That habit might have to change. Mr Prescott later met Malcolm Rifkind, the transport secretary, to talk about rail safety. A disgruntled commuter, Nicholas Samengo-Turner, aged 36, a City financier, from Wickhambrook, Suffolk, said yesterday that he is to sue British Rail for causing him distress as a result of "its inadequate service".



Lending support: Bernadette McAleisey (right), the former MP, accompanying Anna-Rose Doherty, wife of one of the crew members of the Eksund II, and her two daughters as they wait for the start of the third day of the crew's trial in Paris yesterday. Judge Martine Anzani, concluded the trial but said a verdict would not be delivered on the five Irish crew

members charged with transporting arms, importing prohibited merchandise and using forged documents, until March 6. They are alleged to have been smuggling surface-to-air missiles, guns and explosives from Libya to the IRA. Patrick Lalonde, for the prosecution, had asked on Tuesday that sentences of seven years be given to James Doherty, James Coll and

Gabriel Cleary. He called for Henry Cairns to be jailed for five years and for a sentence of seven years to be given to Adrian Hopkins, the skipper, who is being tried in his absence. The Panamanian freighter was seized by French customs officers off the Brittany coast in October 1987, when the arms worth £3.5 million were found on board.

# Gas workers offered 9% rise

By TIM JONES, EMPLOYMENT CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Gas last night offered a 9 per cent pay rise to its 28,000 blue collar workers and rejected as totally unrealistic union demands for a 20 per cent increase.

After the adjournment of talks in London, union leaders said that they were determined to press ahead with

their inflation-breaking claim for one of the highest pay rises in industry.

A spokesman for British Gas said that the claim ignored completely the current economic climate and the company's responsibilities to its 18 million customers. "We have made a realistic offer

which recognises the continuing contribution of our employees to improved productivity."

Union negotiators were particularly angry that the company had failed to respond to its demands for a 24-hour reduction in the working week to 35 hours and for full

consolidation of bonus and supplementary payments. Eddie Newall, national energy officer for the GMB general union, said the union was insisting that the company should address all elements of the claim.

The GMB claims that British Gas pays much less than comparable industries on basic rates and that a big pay rise is needed to counter a drastic decline in morale.

Meanwhile, leaders of Britain's biggest union, the transport workers, have become the first to agree to a pay freeze to safeguard the jobs of their members at a company facing financial difficulties because of the recession.

The 800 workers at London Carriers International, a distributor of electrical goods, had expected a pay rise from the first of this month but agreed to a six-month freeze.

Union leaders recommended workers to accept a rise of between 8.75 per cent and 9.25 per cent from June 1, equivalent to a 12-month deal of between 4.4 per cent and 4.6 per cent.

# Monet puts academy back in profit

By SIMON TAIT, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

THE Royal Academy has been saved from deficit by its most successful exhibition. Roger de Grey, the president, said yesterday. A £549,000 loss on 1989 was turned into a "small surplus" thanks largely to the exhibition *Monet in the 90s: the series paintings*.

"Monet paid off our deficit, repaid our debt to the development trust from which we borrowed £400,000, and helped to finance the current Egon Schiele exhibition," Mr de Grey said. Piers Rodgers, the academy secretary, added: "We would rather make the surplus before we make the

deficits, but you have to take the rough with the smooth."

Earlier in the year *The Art of Photography*, the academy's first photographic exhibition, became the most popular in Britain, with 188,000 visits.

The Monet exhibition, from September 7 to December 9, had 658,000 visitors. It was on for a shorter period than other exhibitions which recorded slightly higher totals, but the daily attendance of 295 made it the most popular. It was also the most expensive, with the first £5 admission for an academy exhibition. An experiment with pre-booking

is to be adopted for all academy exhibitions.

The annual report shows that the academy had 956,000 visitors in all, 21 per cent more than 1989. For 1991 the high point is to be the opening of the £9.5 million redevelopment, with the conversion of the Diploma Galleries.

Almost £3 million was distributed to authors last year as a result of public library loans of their books, with 55 receiving the maximum of £6,000. For the tenth year in succession Catherine Cookson has the most titles in the list with 22.

# Tenants face eviction after race-hate claim

By CRAIG SETON

A COUNCIL has won a court order to evict a family alleged to have subjected Asian neighbours to a sustained campaign of racial abuse.

Sandwell council, in the West Midlands, is believed to be the first outside London to gain a possession order solely on grounds of racial harassment by a tenant. The Commission for Racial Equality yesterday welcomed the action as a warning to others and a sign that ethnic minorities were more willing to give evidence of racial abuse.

West Bromwich county court granted the order against Hilda Carter and her two adult sons after they were alleged to have racially harassed their neighbours, Amrick Samra, aged 46, and his wife, Mohinder, and their six children, at Cape Hill, Smethwick.

Mrs Carter was given until February 4 to leave her council flat, six doors from the

Samras, who claimed yesterday to have been attacked and verbally abused, and to have had bottles thrown at them.

The council claimed that Mrs Carter had broken her tenancy agreement and said that it had no obligation to rehouse her. Peter Hargreaves, its housing director, said: "We have a clear policy that where complaints are made we will take action." He said the council had monitored the Samra family's complaints before acting.

Mrs Carter, a widow, aged 60, said yesterday: "I am innocent. I have not done anything to deserve eviction, and I intend to fight it. I have no idea where I shall go. I think the other family are picking on us because we are white. What the council has done to us is racist."

Mr Samra's daughter Barinder, aged 17, said: "Our life has been made hell."

# Crusading father of the House to retire

By RICHARD FORD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Commons is to lose one of its indefatigable campaigners with the retirement at the next general election of Sir Bernard Braine, the father of the House.

An ardent crusader against all that he believes has undermined the common decency of British life, his voice has boomed and his arms have flailed against the horrors of alcohol, abortion, video nasties and the heroin trade. From the Tory back benches his volcanic interruptions in debates are often so emotional that they tend to overwhelm the message he was delivering.

Sir Bernard, aged 76, a kindly man and traditional right-wing patriot, has managed to transcend party lines during his 40 years in the Commons. In recent years he has been at the forefront of the campaigns to reform the abortion law and to change the regulations so that alleged war

criminals in the UK can be brought to trial.

Passed over for ministerial office in 1970 by Edward Heath, Sir Bernard said that since then he had based his work on advice given by his late wife, Kathleen: "She said: 'Play it to your advantage, be your own man', and that is what I have always tried to do."

Sir Bernard will be succeeded as Father of the House by Mr Heath, who in 1950 took the oath as an MP only minutes after his. Last night Mr Heath's office confirmed that he would stand at the next general election.

Sir Bernard was first elected as an MP in 1950 in the Billericay constituency and has won a further 11 consecutive elections. He is MP for Castle Point, a southeast Essex constituency, and had a majority of 19,248 at the 1987 general election.

# £50m in cocaine seized in Scotland

Customs and police officers in Scotland have made what is believed to be the biggest seizure of cocaine in the United Kingdom (Kerry Gill writes).

It is understood that a half a tonne of cocaine with a street value of £50 million, was intercepted in an operation, codenamed Klondyke, in a remote part of northwest Scotland.

Customs confirmed the seizure last night and in London a spokesman said that half a tonne of cocaine was recovered. It is believed to have been moved out of the Highlands to a secure location and that any trial may be held away from the Highlands.

A customs source said the operation had been aimed originally at a specific group of suspected hashish smugglers.

## Sheep fear over

Controls on the slaughter and movement of sheep are to be lifted in part of Cumbria still contaminated by radioactive fallout from Chernobyl, the agriculture ministry said yesterday. From Monday 22,000 sheep on nearly 40 farms will be removed from restrictions imposed in September 1986. About 130,000 sheep in Cumbria, as well as in areas of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, will still be restricted.

## Sale request

The House of Commons public accounts committee has asked Northern Ireland's Industrial Development Board to sell some of its 1,500 acres and 36 factories that lie idle. The committee is also concerned that 122 of the 260 companies renting property from the board owe £600,000. Some have gone out of business.

## Tourist record

American visitors helped to make October a record month for tourism in Britain. More than 330,000 arrived from the US, 6 per cent up on October 1989, according to the British Tourist Authority. Overall there were 1,450,000 overseas visitors, who spent £650 million, an increase of 2 per cent on 1989.

## Warm hotline

A telephone hotline set up by Sheffield council to provide details of a voluntary severance scheme, aimed at shedding 3,500 jobs by Easter to avoid a £35 million deficit, received 2,000 calls in its first 48 hours.

## CORRECTIONS

The sum given in a report (Jan 7) as the extra poll tax cost for housing the homeless in hotels should have been £3.79, not £20.39. The incorrect figure was supplied by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

Although the British Medical Association's report on pesticides (Jan 4) called for their withdrawal or restriction where there are serious concerns about safety, Dr John Inman, who helped to prepare the report, asks us to point out that he did not seek a ban. He advocated caution in their use and a search for more epidemiological evidence.

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## ADVERTISEMENT

# Male virility problems solved

AN important breakthrough in the treatment of male impotence has led to unprecedented success in recent clinically controlled trials.

Results of the new treatment on 4,000 men has proved that the majority of sufferers can now be successfully treated. A spokesman for The London Diagnostic Centre, a leading independent clinic specialising in the field of male sexual problems said yesterday:

"Male impotence affects far more men than is realised and many of the cases previously diagnosed as untreatable have been helped to resume a normal sex life. Many men are already using this thoroughly tested and safe treatment in the privacy of their own homes."

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£1 million fee, page 24

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# Elvis elevated to classic radio status

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

CLASSICAL music enthusiasts awaiting the debut this autumn of a national commercial "non-pop" alternative to BBC Radio 3 could find themselves listening to Elvis Presley's "Heartbreak Hotel" or Buddy Holly's "Peggy Sue" or any other golden oldie recorded before January 1, 1960.

The Radio Authority, which yesterday disclosed the specifications of the new national stereo FM licence, has decided not only that all music recorded before 1960 qualifies as "non-pop", but also that 25 per cent of the licensee's musical output within a three-hour period can be pop.

With only 75 per cent of its total output required to be music, and 75 per cent of that required to be non-pop, the winner of the licence could broadcast up to 29 minutes of pop or rock every hour if there was eight minutes of advertising an hour.

Alan Kilkenny of Classic FM, a consortium bidding for the FM licence, said: "A successful station has to have a clear identity. For a rock



Lord Chalfont, chairman of the Radio Authority, at its official lunch yesterday

station to hide under sheep's clothing would be both difficult and disappointing for millions who want to hear classical music."

Tim Schoonmaker, managing director of EMAP Radio who conducted Rock FM's unsuccessful attempt last autumn to persuade the government that rock was non-pop, said: "Anyone setting out to pull a fast one because of this technical loophole is probably wasting their time. It would be wonderful if the authority had come up with clear guidelines, but in the area of music that's

next to impossible."

Lord Chalfont, the Radio Authority chairman, said the station would not be allowed "to fill the best hours of the day with pop because they think it will be more lucrative". The authority will, however, investigate only departures from the prescribed format if it receives complaints, he said.

Austin Mitchell, the Labour MP who now hosts LBC's morning *NewsTalk* in London, is in breach of new Radio Authority guidelines on impartiality preventing poli-

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# Standard of reading low in 20% of schools inspectors say

By DAVID TYTLER, EDUCATION EDITOR

THE teaching of reading requires urgent attention in one in five infant and primary schools in England where standards are poor, according to a report by school inspectors published yesterday. Overall reading standards have not fallen since 1978, but nor have they risen, the inspectors said.

In 80 per cent of schools, reading standards were satisfactory or better, and in 30 per cent standards were high. The inspectors' findings showed that "standards are not as high as they need or ought to be", the report said. Inspectors and the School Examinations and Assessment Council were asked by John MacGregor, the former education secretary, to report on reading standards after a group of education psychologists claimed that their research showed the biggest

fall in standards among seven-year-olds for 45 years.

The psychologists, from nine local authorities, said that tests on 347,000 pupils aged seven showed a 50 per cent rise over the previous four years in the number unable to master simple words and sentences, and blamed new teaching methods, such as "real books".

Inspectors, during a survey of 120 primary schools, heard 2,000 pupils read, and found no evidence that any one teaching method is best or that some modern methods cause low standards.

Methods currently used are:  
 □ Phonics: pupils are taught to analyse and build words by sounding out letters and combinations.  
 □ Look and say: pupils learn to recognise whole words and sentences by their shape and pattern and to compose their own words and sentences from banks of letters and words.

□ Real books: pupils are moved away from reading schemes and are taught at an early stage to attempt to read from attractively produced children's books.

Almost 85 per cent of teachers used a mixture of methods and in less than 18 per cent of classes was a single method used exclusively or even predominantly. The inspectors said, however: "There was clear evidence that adherence to a single approach, whatever the particular method, hindered the children's reading development".

Most schools enlisted parents to listen to children reading, and high standards were often found where there was strong parental support. Difficulties arose, the report said, where there was high turnover of teachers, and 25 per cent of schools visited had seen more than half their teachers leave within three years. Only one of these schools was achieving better than satisfactory standards, and in half of them reading was poor.

Common characteristics of schools achieving high standards were firm leadership from the head, a clear reading policy understood by all staff, well-managed classrooms able to deal with the needs of individual pupils and a wide variety of appropriate books.

The single most important factor was the quality of teaching, which was illustrated by the variation of reading standards between classes in the same school. In poor classes, children were not encouraged to take responsibility or to show initiative, there was too much noise and the teacher was often distracted.

The report was based on a survey of local authorities by the National Foundation for Educational Research. Only 26 of the 94 education authorities in England had either gathered information or were prepared to release it.

Kenneth Clarke, the education secretary, said that he was disappointed in the small number of authorities able to take part in the survey, but accepted that the report did indicate low standards.

Letters, page 13

## Saturday Review

### Arthur Miller meets Nelson Mandela

*'There were moments when I wondered whether I had taken the correct decision in getting committed to the struggle. But at the end I would feel that I had... the certainty of our final victory was always there'*

America's greatest living playwright visits South Africa, and talks to the symbol of black resistance

### The heat in the kitchen

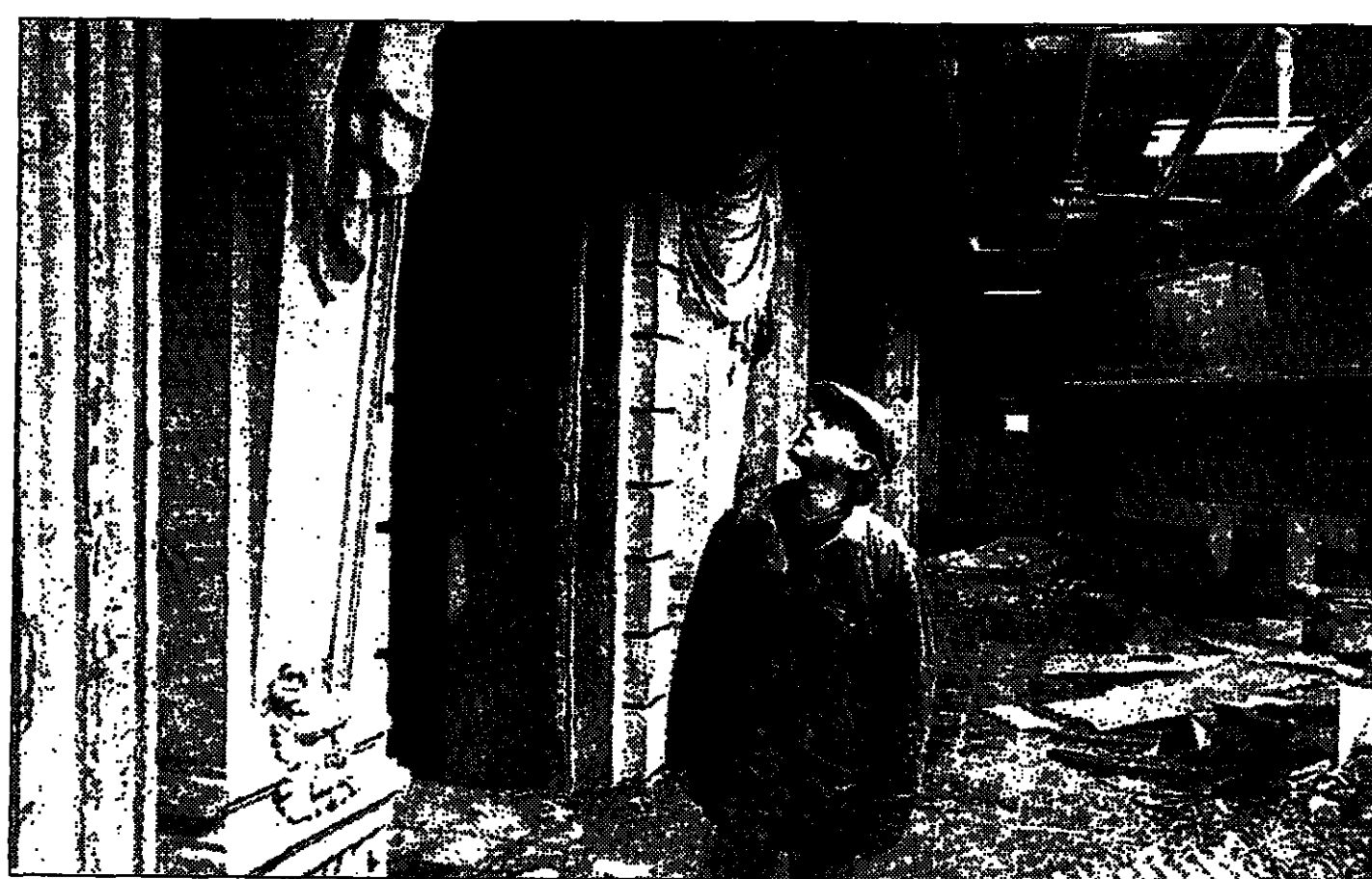
*'I believe that every son should build something out of his life for his mother'*

What Marco Pierre White, enfant terrible of British cuisine, built was an international reputation for food and fury

### Want to be left alone?

*'The rising rich and famous who want to see and be seen go to St Moritz, while those who have arrived and do not, come to Gstaad'*

Shona Crawford Poole, Travel Editor, considers how, why and when this Swiss village became a byword for exclusivity



## Pump room protest halts bulldozers

By JOHN YOUNG

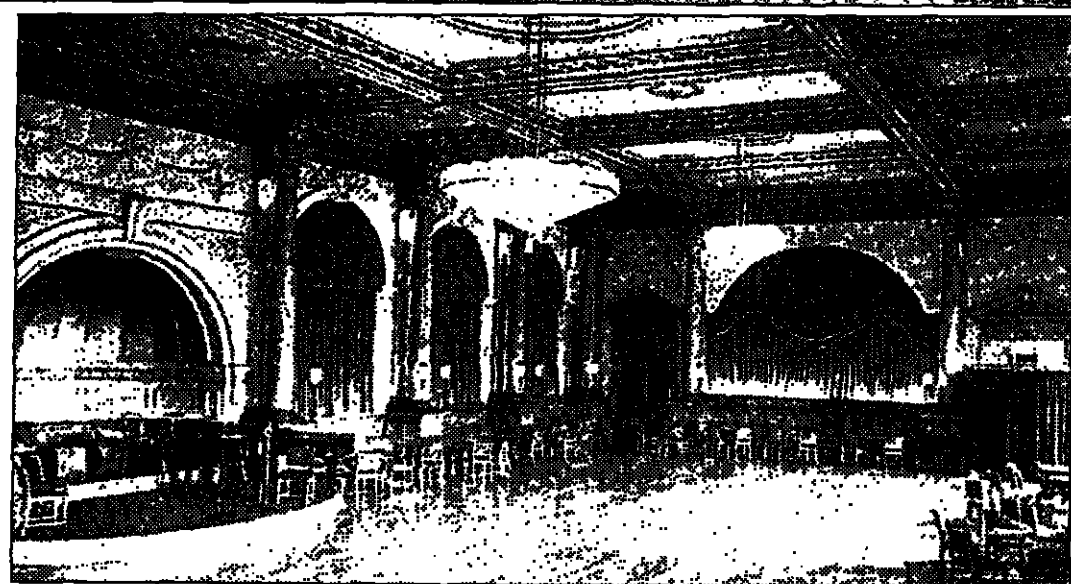
CONTRACTORS were yesterday forced to abandon the demolition of a Victorian pump room on the edge of Avon Gorge at Clifton, Bristol, after a confrontation with angry protesters. They vowed, however, to try again today.

The building, designed by Philip Munro, was opened in 1894 as part of a spa complex, and was later used as a cinema and dance hall. Although now in a dilapidated state, its marble Corinthian columns and ornate plasterwork ceilings are still largely intact.

It was removed from protected building status last year against the advice of English Heritage, the government's advisory body, after an application by the owners, Mount Charlotte Thistle Hotels.

Plans to demolish the building were rejected in 1985 by Bristol city council, but the decision was overruled by the environment department. Demolition was postponed, and its survival seemed certain when it was listed in 1989.

After Lord Hesketh, then the



Top, one of the protesters who helped to stop the demolition men surveys Clifton pump room's dilapidated interior; above, the Victorian ballroom in 1953

minister responsible for historic buildings, agreed to "delist" it, the council obtained an injunction, which was overturned by the county court last Friday. The owners now intend to build an extension to the Avon Gorge hotel on the site.

Conservationists say the development would destroy not only a notable piece of Victorian architecture but the upper terminus of an underground funicular railway, which links the pump room with a riverside

walk at the foot of the gorge, 200ft below.

Dorothy Brown, chairman of the Bristol Visual and Environment Group, said yesterday that the railway could be revived as a link between the harbour and the Bristol suspension bridge. "It is a feat of Victorian engineering which ranks alongside the bridge and the SS Great Britain," she said. The developers should not be allowed to get away with demolishing a piece of history.

Clifton Smith-Cox, Mount

Charlotte's chairman, said that to repair the pump room was totally unfeasible. Renovation of the building and the railway would cost about £1 million and the idea of returning the railway to use was ridiculous.

An environment department spokesman said that Lord Hesketh had looked carefully at the owners' application for delisting, and had decided that the building was not of sufficient architectural merit to remain on the list.

## Eight named to science study

By NICK NUTTALL  
TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

AN ENQUIRY into science and technology policy for the coming century was launched yesterday by the Royal Society. The decision by the country's most distinguished scientific body comes at a time of concern about the fate of British researchers and their projects.

The Science and Engineering Research Council (SERC), one of the country's main funding bodies, has cut its grants programme (SERC) in an attempt to meet a £40 million deficit. Both the Medical Research Council and the Agricultural and Food Research

Council are also facing funding difficulties.

The society has appointed a team of eight senior fellows, under the chairmanship of Sir Michael Atiyah, the newly elected president and master of Trinity College, Cambridge.

They were named yesterday as Professor Arnold Wolfendale, the newly-appointed Astronomer Royal; Dr John Skehel, director of the National Institute for Medical Research at Mill Hill, north London; Lord Adrian, master of Pembroke College, Cambridge; Sir John Cadogan, director of research at British Petroleum; Professor David Davies, vice-

chancellor of Loughborough university; Professor John Dewey, a geologist; Professor John Enderby, a physicist; and Professor Robert May, a biologist.

Dr Peter Collins, of the society's science policy secretariat, said the committee would begin meeting next month and produce a full report in 12 to 15 months. They would try to establish the framework for a strong British research base for the next five to ten years.

The committee will collate evidence from fellows of the society and from policy centres such as SERC, the University Funding Council and the Advisory Council on Science and Technology, which advises the government on priorities for funding, including international projects.

Dr John Mulvey, of Oxford university, a spokesman for Save British Science, said that the move was very timely.

"There are signs that the government is prepared to listen and that they are aware there are major problems,"

Dr David Harrison, vice-chancellor of Exeter university and president-elect of the Institution of Chemical Engineers, told the institution's annual conference in Cambridge yesterday: "It is clear across the developed world that the funding of undergraduate teaching and fundamental research comes from general taxation and not from industrial or commercial resources, save indirectly through corporation tax."

"The more people that can make this clear to government, the better," he said.

## Labour wants public Camelford enquiry

By PETER VICTOR

THE government was accused yesterday of failing to protect the health of people affected by aluminium sulphate dumped in water supplies at Camelford, north Cornwall, as water users and scientists called for health monitoring of those affected, and for a public enquiry.

Ann Taylor, shadow minister for environmental protection, repeated Labour's demands for a full public enquiry after South West Water Authority's conviction and £10,000 fine at Exeter crown court on Tuesday when it admitted supplying water contaminated with aluminium sulphate.

"Tuesday's legal judgment is the first positive recognition that the water authority was liable for the effects of the incident at Camelford," she said. "The people responsible for supplying poisoned water to 20,000 people are still in charge at the private South West Water company. The same managers are benefiting from the increased salaries and perks of privatisation."

John Lewis, who was dismissed by the authority after the incident, called yesterday for Keith Court, executive chairman of South West Water, to resign. Mr Lewis, thought by some involved with the case to have been made a scapegoat, said: "He did not appear at court to defend his actions during the incident."

A steering group comprising

affected Camelford residents, doctors and scientists will meet on January 22 to press for compensation and a public enquiry. Writs seeking compensation are to be issued.

Elizabeth Sigmund, co-ordinator of the South West environmental protection agency, said she would be pressing for a public enquiry. "We also want long-term monitoring of the health of the people affected. It should be paid for by the health department."

John Bull, senior lecturer in pollution, ecology and environmental science at the Polytechnic of the South West, said: "The sensible thing would be to set up a long-term medical investigation."

The water company faces some 1,000 compensation claims, but many have been settled for up to £800. Lawyers representing the outstanding cases estimate that 200 to 300 people are pressing claims for long-term effects. The privatised authority said yesterday that Mr Court had no intention of resigning: "The incident took place more than two years ago. As far as the plc is concerned, the criminal case was against the residual authority."

The authority is to lodge an appeal and has brought a civil action against the delivery company whose driver pumped the chemical into fresh water tanks. A High Court hearing is scheduled for April 15 next year.

Photograph, page 22

## Centenary Crufts opens with record entry

By CRAIG SETON



Canine mop: Margarita Froome of Hertfordshire at Crufts yesterday with her Hungarian Puli, Whichendz Which

THE annual Crufts dog show began yesterday and celebrated its centenary and a move from London to Birmingham with a record entry of 23,232 dogs to compete for the most coveted canine awards in the United Kingdom.

The start of the four-day event caused traffic jams several miles long as exhibitors and spectators queued to get into the National Exhibition Centre. A record attendance of more than 100,000 is expected by Saturday, when the best in show will be selected.

The number of dogs entered in 1,948 breed classes is 57 per cent more than last year's event at Earls Court, London. The Kennel Club, which organises the show, believes

the increase is due to the new location and the centenary. In the year since the last show, an attempt to introduce dog registration failed in the Commons after a number of cases involving attacks on children by dogs with a reputation for fierceness.

Tony Baldry, the environment under-secretary responsible for dogs, visited Crufts yesterday and made a bee-line for the rottweiler ring, where he reiterated the government's determination to deal with stray or dangerous dogs, irresponsible owners and dogs fouling public places.

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# Insurance firm bans hospitals after '1,000% costs mark-up'

By JILL SHERMAN, SOCIAL SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

A LEADING health insurance company has blacklisted a group of private hospitals because it says that patients are being overcharged for treatment.

Western Provident Association, the third largest private health insurance firm, says that many private hospitals are marking up drugs, food and dressings by up to 1,000 per cent. Hospitals have charged £130 for a tin of talcum powder, £12.86 for a sleeping pill and £6.80 for a strip of plaster.

The association yesterday blacklisted the French-owned AMI hospital group, which has

about 15 hospitals in this country and charges about £500 a day for treatment. The insurer will now pay up to £275 a day for any patient staying in an AMI hospital, but the patient will have to pay the balance.

The Princess Grace AMI hospital in London allegedly charged a woman aged over 75 £45 for a pregnancy test she did not have and £12.86 for a sleeping tablet, according to bills received by the insurance company. Three AMI hospitals charged patients different prices for surgical gloves: £2.55, £5 and £7.30, although they cost only 20p a pair.

Julian Stanton, the insurance company's managing director, said: "The company said they would sooner have empty beds than lower their prices, so we removed them from our list."

He accused hospitals of "bed-side robbery" and said many hospitals loaded patients' bills if they knew that they were covered by private health insurance. The Cromwell hospital, west London, allegedly increased its bill for heart surgery from £6,500 to £9,000 when it discovered that the patient had insurance cover.

Dr Marvin Goldberg, managing director of AMI, said that the company had kept price increases in line with inflation. Costs varied from £250 a day to considerably more than £500, depending on the treatment needed, he said. The £12.85 charge for sleeping pills and the £45 pregnancy test were mistakes that had since been rectified.

The disparity in the cost of gloves related to consultants' requirements. "It is swings and roundabouts. WPA has picked up one or two mistakes out of millions of billings. In other cases the clerks may have forgotten to include items."

Jeremy Hayes, the Conservative MP for Harlow and a member of the Commons select committee on health, said that unless a brake was put on "gross overcharging", patients would flee to overburdened a crumbling health service.

## Waiting list controller is appointed

WESSEX area health authority has employed a trouble-shooter to help to reduce the number of patients waiting operations. The authority, which covers Hampshire, has more than 55,000 people needing surgery, with some 3,500 having waited for over two years.

Government funding has provided £3.5 million for extra consultants and facilities to help to reduce waiting lists in the region and the health authority hopes that employing a managerial specialist, a former hospital manager, will enable an extra 7,000 people a year to be treated.

Sue Fossford, an authority spokesman, said: "The operations concerned are for non-urgent admissions such as hip or knee operations, which are not life-threatening but which can give the people concerned a great deal of suffering."

"If their condition worsens, GPs are obviously able to recommend that they should get their operations more quickly. We are always going to have people waiting for surgery: it's just a question of cutting down the time it takes."

# Battle on to fill the great skills gap

A huge gap exists between training and the future need for skilled workers. Philip Bassett on what is being done

BY THE end of the century, about 40 per cent of jobs in Britain will require high skills, recent research has forecast. Thirty per cent would be semi-skilled jobs, and the remaining 30 per cent unskilled.

Those figures, drawn from the Institute of Employment Research at Warwick university, contrast with government surveys which show that, at present, 13 per cent of the workforce have higher-level skills, 22 per cent are classed as skilled and 23 per cent semi-skilled. Forty-two per cent of the British workforce has no skill qualifications.

The imbalance is especially acute when compared with the position in competitor countries. In Germany, all school leavers go into training or further education, 69 per cent of them full-time. In Japan, 96 per cent go, 92 per cent full-time. In the US, 94 per cent — all full-time. In Britain, 91 per cent do — only half of them full-time. By the time they reach 17, the total still in training and education has dropped to 75 per cent.

That large gap spells a continuation, and probably a worsening, of Britain's overall economic performance. If Britain is not to fall increasingly further behind the skill levels of its competitor workforces, that gap, examined yesterday by the government, employers and unions at the National Economic Development Council, has to be bridged.

The government's favoured method is its 82 training and enterprise councils (TECs), employer-led local bodies that are in effect a privatisation of centrally led and funded government training. Modelled on similar but now only patchily successful bodies in the US, TECs were launched in great style, and have been actively promoted by Michael Howard, the employment secretary.

TECs have been the lever for the generation of real enthusiasm for training among businesses, many of whose previous ideas about investing in training were limited to paying higher



Resigning: Judith Donovan, dissatisfied by progress of national training committee

salaries to poach employees trained by rival companies. As the CBI says in its paper for the NEDC meeting: "Skills have never been higher on the business agenda."

Whether they stay there, whether that genuine enthusiasm can survive the present recession is the key training question. The confederation says employers have not cut training budgets — so far.

Bill Jordan, president of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, thinks they are, however. In one of the most extreme examples of growing concern that training will be suffered first as the recession affects companies increasingly hard, construction companies are being offered grants of £500 a time if they take on apprentices from rival building firms which have gone into liquidation.

Unemployment is going up, increasing the demand for training. Companies' training budgets are being squeezed. The Treasury in the government's autumn statement in November

cut training funding back by £120 million in this financial year, and by £230 million in 1991-2. What TECs do about this triple pressure is not yet clear. TEC leaders are beginning to complain, but for now are prepared to live with less funding than some of their leaders had hoped for from this year's public spending round.

One way of easing the pressure is for individuals to increase their own spending on training, now running at about £9 billion: significantly, that is something both Mr Howard and the confederation urged in their NEDC submissions. Mindful of the pay increases presently keeping inflation high, which can under one view be traced back to companies' large-scale and unilateral abandonment of training in the early 1980s, employers will be reluctant to drop the real support for training the government has managed to engender among them. How far they will be able to maintain that stance may depend finally on how deep the recession proves to be.

## Training chief quits in protest

CRITICISM of the government's much-vaunted skill training programme has emerged from two key sources.

Judith Donovan, a member of the G10 national committee representing 82 Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), has resigned, saying the committee "was not prepared to be as assertive enough".

Mrs Donovan, aged 39, chairman of the Bradford Tec, in West Yorkshire, and founder of a Bradford direct marketing agency with £9 million turnover last year, said of G10: "Too often, we would express strong views in private only to capitulate when we met ministers."

The Manchester Tec, in a report, said that the government's training scheme for the long-term unemployed failed to give them the skills needed.

# Scheme for jobless 'may lack desired work base'

By TIM JONES  
EMPLOYMENT CORRESPONDENT

A SURVEY of more than 2,500 private and public sector employers published today suggests that new government arrangements for training the unemployed may fail to produce the staff sought by employers.

The survey by Apex Trust, the national ex-offenders employment organisation, is one of the largest conducted into management attitudes to training skills. It accuses the government of gearing funds for the new Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) toward vocational qualifications while failing to give financial recognition to basic skills training.

According to the Apex survey, the firms questioned considered the possession of formal qualifications relatively unimportant for firms when making recruitment decisions.

All ranked honesty, a good attitude, time keeping and motivation as their top four requirements. Vocational and educational qualifications came 10th and 11th in the table of qualities sought by private sector firms.

Bill Mather, the trust's chief executive, said: "This survey underlines our concern that the training obligations being imposed upon TECs will not allow them to provide the necessary funding for basic skills training. Without that, many job applicants will lack the qualities sought by employers at a time when companies are facing recession and must maximise the effectiveness of staff performance."

He said that at the same time the country would see an increasing number of the long-term unemployed, including many thousands of former offenders, languishing further on the dole.

"These findings show clearly that most employers are only willing to consider the long term unemployed, including ex-offenders, for jobs if applicants are prepared for employment through basic skills," he said.

"Unless the emphasis on other employment measures at the expense of basic training is changed then we may fail to deliver a workforce prepared for the challenges of the 1990s."

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## Back muscle could rebuild heart

SCIENTISTS are developing heart operations that could make transplants largely unnecessary and would resolve many ethical issues surrounding them.

The techniques involve rebuilding damaged areas of the heart with muscles taken from the patient's body. If successful, the operations would overcome of transplant rejection and shortages of donor organs.

The procedures are intended mainly to help adults with heart damage, but could also be applied to babies with congenital defects similar to those of Christy Strachan, the 11-day-old baby who died two

### Thomson Prentice reports on a technique that could dispense with donors and transplant rejection

weeks ago within hours of an unsuccessful heart transplant.

The British Heart Foundation yesterday gave a £93,000 grant to researchers in the field. Professor Desmond Julian, the foundation's medical director, said: "We must find alternatives to heart transplantation for medical and ethical reasons. There will never be enough donors and there will always be ethical dilemmas, as in this most recent case. Trans-

plant surgeons are very keen to see these new methods come into practice because they represent an attractive option. We believe that big advances will be made in the next few years."

Professor Stanley Salmon, head of muscle research, and his colleagues at Liverpool university are trying to develop an auxiliary heart pump, created from muscle taken from the patient's back. The muscle, the latissimus dorsi, is stronger than heart muscle and can be removed without causing serious disability, but has to be "trained" to match the ability of the healthy heart to resist fatigue. After being grafted into place, and stimulated into action by an implanted pacemaker, the muscle adopts the heart's natural rhythm and helps it to pump blood adequately around the body.

"If we achieved an improvement in the performance of the heart by only 20 or 25 per cent it would transform the life of the patient and eliminate the need for a transplant," Professor Salmon said yesterday. He and his co-researcher, Dr Jonathan Jarvis, with Dr Michael Collins, a blood-flow expert at City University, London, and Dr Richard Black, of the institute of medical and dental bioengineering at Liverpool university, are being given the grant to develop computer and physical models that will imitate the behaviour of the auxiliary ventricle, the heart's main pumping chamber. The project will provide answers to the problems of blood flow and clotting that might occur when a muscle graft is used.

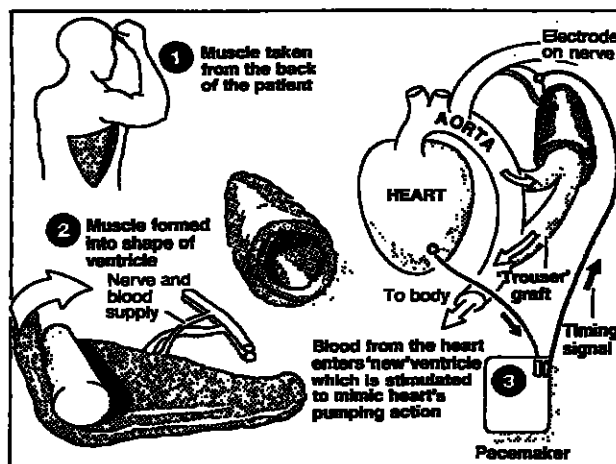
French surgeons have tried a modified version of the operation, in which muscle fibres are wrapped around the ventricle to help it to function. Four out of five patients survived at least two years. The Liverpool approach is more ambitious, but the operation is unlikely to be attempted within five years.

Marc de Leval, who performed the transplant on Christy Strachan at the Hospital for Sick Children in Great Ormond Street, London, defends his decision in a letter to *The Times* today.

Letters, page 13



Magdi Yacoub operating at Harefield hospital in 1989



## Bishop attacks 'ineffective' use of custody

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS REPORTER

THE Church of England's Bishop to Prisons said yesterday that custody was a relatively ineffective way to deal with offenders.

The Right Rev Robert Hardy, the Bishop of Lincoln, welcomed the government's recognition that there were problems with custodial sentences and its plans to introduce a wider range of community penalties.

He criticised the size of the prison population and the poor conditions endured in many jails and called for freedom of worship to be preserved for inmates.

A church report on the penal system, to be published soon, will call for a reduction in the prison population. The bishop will "affirm the valuable ministry of Christians within the criminal justice system" in the first Church of England's first debate on the penal system for more than a decade, taking place at the General Synod this month.

The debate is expected to raise the issue of limits on numbers attending church services in prisons. According to prison chaplains, at least one jail has already limited attendance at services as a result of the riots at Strangeways last year, in which the disturbances began in the prison chapel. The church believes that the debate is crucial because of Lord Justice Woolf's report, due shortly, on the Strangeways riot.

The bishop, who will speak about the church's report on the penal system, *Crime, Justice and the Demands of the Gospel*, said: "There has been a steady build-up of Christian concern with the prisons."

The report, which will be published by the church's Board for Social Responsibility, analyses the government's penal policy over the last decade, outlines the church's contribution and offers a series of suggestions.

The Rev Dr Ian Kenway, author of the report and secretary of the Legal and Criminal Justice Reference Panel, which advises the board, said that a copy of the report will be sent to the Home Office.

It says: "It is important to recognise the absolute prison population is itself a cultural phenomenon or statement. Just as it is possible to judge a society in some way by the flourishing of the arts, so it is possible to judge a society by the way it treats offenders generally and prisoners in particular. The absolute prison population does not simply reflect the level of crime or the efficiency or not of the criminal justice system. It is in a very real sense what we choose or wish it be."

Bishop Hardy will urge the synod to recognise the contribution made by local penal affairs groups, support groups which meet regularly for prayer and often include people who visit inmates.

He praised the criminal justice bill, now before Parliament. "The relative ineffectiveness of custody is recognised in the government white paper. That is part of the shift in thinking... namely that prisons are not very effective in reforming people. We are expressing our concern as Christian people, not in a negative way but adding to the concern many people feel."

## Post-Christmas rush for divorces predicted

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

DIVORCE lawyers can expect a flood of work in the wake of the Christmas break, according to a nationwide chain of solicitors' firms.

David Salter, chairman of the Norton Rose M5 group's family law section, said: "Although it is the season of goodwill, Christmas is a time of immense stress for families and all too often it ends in conflict."

"For many couples this fortnight of enforced togetherness in a year otherwise spent pursuing separate interests can prove just too much. Every January sees a significant upsurge in divorce work for family lawyers."

The group, whose seven firms are spread throughout the country, has launched a free guide to divorce, highlighting the benefits of a constructive approach to marital breakdown.

The guide is being published after recent proposals by the Law Commission for a new divorce procedure based on a process over time, removing the need to blame one partner in order to obtain a divorce.

Mr Salter said lawyers could seldom prevent marital breakdown but they could make the process less painful and less expensive for all parties if they

helped couples to avoid an aggressive approach to separation, even when it went to court.

The guide includes advice on a fair approach to finance and examines some of the more complex aspects of financial settlements.

A section by Dr D.J. Black, a fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, comments on the effects of divorce on children.

Copies of the guide can be obtained from Norton Rose M5, The Priory, Queensway, Birmingham, B4 6BS.

## Four Labour councillors suspended

Four Labour members on Gwent council have been suspended for three months for voting against a decision to close Brynmawr comprehensive school.

Katrina Gass, Colin Jones, Mai Jones and Joy Rees, who represent the Brynmawr area, are being supported by parents and governors, who say opting out is the only way to save the school.

## Sellafield start

Commissioning of the Thorp reprocessing plant at Sellafield has started, it was announced yesterday. It will be a year before the plant is completed. Construction work started nine years ago and cost £1.85 billion.

## £500,000 gift

Dr June Sutor, a research scientist, has left Moorfields eye hospital, London, nearly £500,000 for research into the prevention of blindness provided it does not involve animal testing.

## Drug trial delay

The trial of Patricia Cahill, the Birmingham teenager accused of helping to smuggle heroin out of Thailand, was adjourned yesterday until January 30 after a witness failed to appear in court at Bangkok.

## Gambling death

Osamu Nakao, a Japanese export manager from Kyoto, hanged himself at a central London hotel after losing more than £54,000 in gambling debts over two years, an inquest in Westminster was told yesterday.

## Slim winner

Lesley Godwin, aged 29, of Loudwater, Buckinghamshire, who has lost more than six stone, was yesterday named young slimmer of the year.

## Airport date

The Queen will open the £400 million terminal at Stansted airport, Essex, on March 15.

## Doctors track down key gene

By THOMSON PRENTICE MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

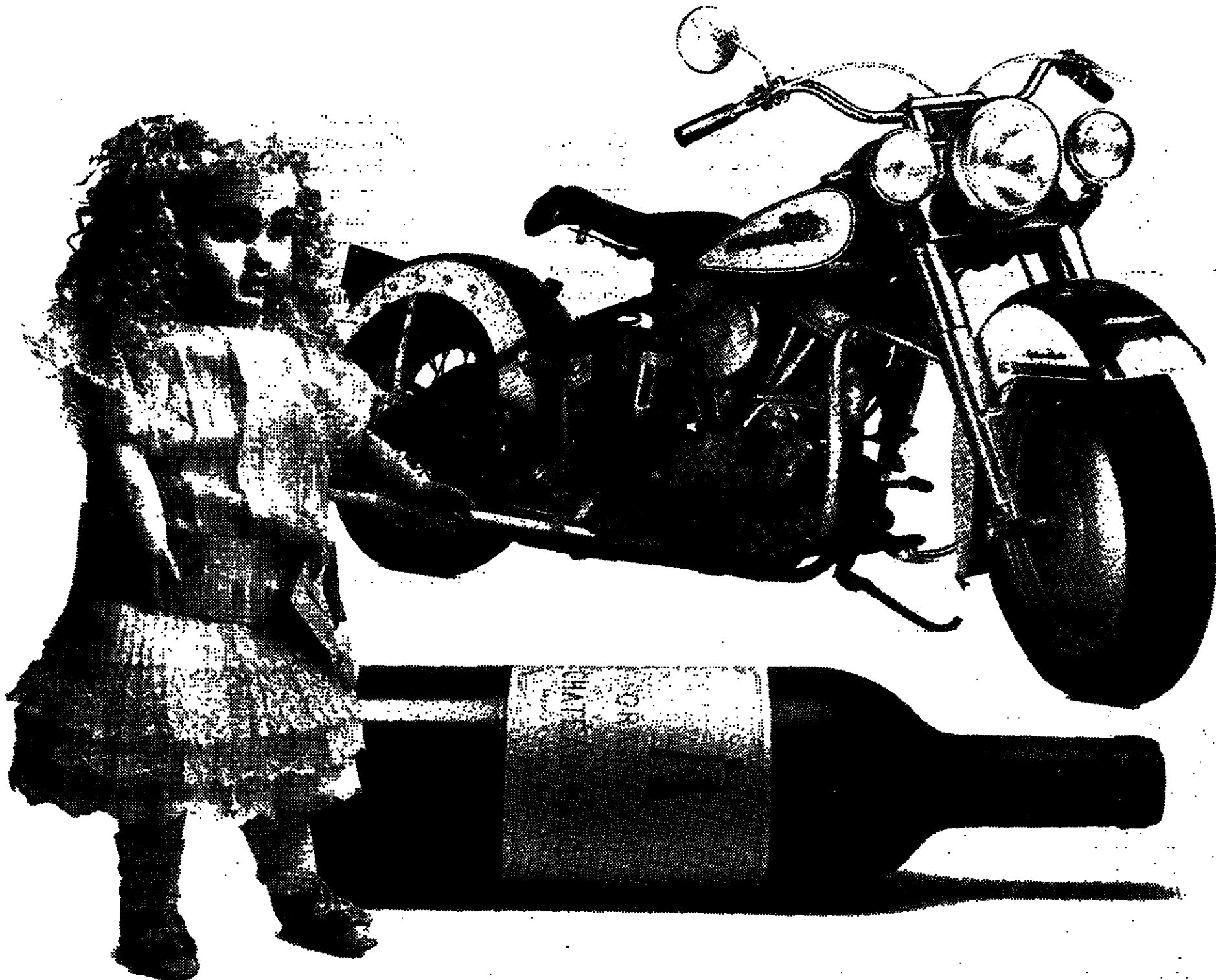
BRITISH researchers have discovered the underlying cause of the commonest form of inherited heart disease.

Doctors at a Medical Research Council unit in Harrow, west London, have tracked the gene that triggers the condition in a group of affected families. The disorder, familial combined hyperlipidaemia (FCHL), causes about 10 per cent of heart attacks and angina in people under 60.

The abnormality responsible for the condition appears to prevent blood fat and cholesterol being cleared naturally from the circulation. This leads to high levels of the substances building up in the wall of coronary arteries, giving rise to atherosclerosis, the disease that provokes heart attacks.

The findings by Dr James Scott and colleagues at the MRC Clinical Research Centre at Northwick Park Hospital are published in *Nature* today. Further studies based on the research will help provide a clearer understanding of FCHL and could allow early detection of the condition and effective protection against it in individuals at risk, Dr Scott said yesterday.

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To bring the airline back to its historic preeminence, we developed and initiated a three-point strategic plan:

- (1) Invest the money required to return Pan Am to the service standards that once led the industry.
- (2) Provide financial resources by selling assets not fundamental to the operation of a strong airline.
- (3) Rebuild employee commitment so that once again Pan Am people feel and act like the special people they are.

Until mid-summer 1990, the plan was working.

We were an industry leader in on-time performance, receiving the highest passenger-satisfaction ratings in our history, carrying record numbers of passengers, and setting new revenue records by the month.

## A WORLD IN CRISIS.

Then Iraq invaded Kuwait, and all forecasts of operating results went with it. On an annualized basis, Pan Am's fuel bill increased by a catastrophic \$500 million, \$150 million in the 4th quarter alone.

Concurrently, the growing recession in the U.S. and deteriorating economic conditions abroad combined to bring about a decline in air travel.

These economic shocks, converging within a six-month period, have taken a heavy toll on this company's cash flow. The progress we have made on our operating and strategic plans cannot sufficiently offset these setbacks.

What can offset them is our agreement with United Airlines which will provide us \$400 million from the transfer of some of our London routes as well as opportunities for greatly increased revenues through a comprehensive marketing agreement. While we have already received \$110 million, U.S. and British Governmental approvals are required before this agreement is final and the remaining funds become available to us.

As a result of these events, a restructuring of our financial obligations is required.

And, restructuring requires time. Therefore, we have filed to begin the reorganization process under Chapter 11.

## BUSINESS AS USUAL MEANS BUSINESS AS USUAL.

Unlike some reorganization filings in this industry, our action was not taken as a result of labour strife.

We have sound, constructive relationships with our 30,000 employees, and effective labour agreements with all of our unions.

As this is a filing for financial restructuring only, all flight operations will continue as usual, at our same high levels, without a ripple of interruption.

- We will continue full flight schedules on all routes, including the Pan Am Shuttle and Pan Am Express.
- Our relationships and agreements with Travel Agents and other airlines will remain intact. And, of course, all Travel Agent commissions will be paid.
- Tickets will be honoured as usual.

## FINANCING IS IN PLACE.

Bankers Trust Company and United Airlines have sufficient confidence in our future to provide us a loan of \$150 million as part of the reorganization process, subject to court approvals.

This, combined with cash on hand from operations, will meet our liquidity requirements until the United Airlines transaction is concluded.

Which, in turn, will put us in a solid cash position to continue to implement our strategic plan.

## THE FAR-REACHING BENEFITS OF THE PAN AM - UNITED AIRLINES AGREEMENT.

Our cooperative agreement with United Airlines is moving forward as planned.

What this provides is a multitude of substantial, tangible benefits to our customers, as well as a strong improvement in our financial position.

First, a substantial cash infusion will happen upon closing.

Second, we and the flying public will reap the benefits of a cooperative frequent flyer programme, one which will be the most attractive in the industry.

Third, Pan Am will benefit by United's ability to feed U.S. passengers into Pan Am's international network.

Fourth, the two airlines will coordinate schedules for maximum passenger convenience.

Fifth, and of major importance, is United's \$100 million consumer ticket guarantee programme which will provide assurance to all Pan Am ticket holders.

## A STRATEGY FOR LONG-TERM SUCCESS IS IN PLACE.

Pan Am is an airline monumental in its contributions to aviation. For it was Pan Am, single-handedly and against enormous odds, that opened America, and the world, to international air travel.

We realize that Pan Am's future success cannot be built solely on its historic leadership. But, we can once again be a great airline, and we're confident, a financially successful one.

To bring this about, we are working to position the airline to benefit from the tremendous growth that lies ahead in two major economic sectors of the world: Continental Europe and Latin America.

We continue to fly to more European cities than all other U.S. airlines combined. We are the only U.S. carrier that serves virtually every emerging country in Eastern Europe, as well as the Soviet Union. We are continuing to develop Frankfurt into a major European hub, which means we'll be situated right in the middle of a united Europe and well positioned to serve Eastern Europe as it grows in economic importance.

Latin America, our other area of concentration, and quite likely the world's next boom area, is now being served, profitably, from our vastly enlarged Miami hub. We now fly to 56 international destinations and 31 U.S. cities from Miami. We have enjoyed continuous, profitable growth in Miami for 62 years and consider our current Latin American strength as a base on which to build even greater success.

We ask you to stay with us during this time, not as a favour to us, but as a service to yourself. We want to retain your business and to continue to earn your loyalty.

We are totally dedicated to operating the kind of airline that rightfully attracts - through a high level of service - more than its share of travellers.

Today, Pan Am offers proud service to over 115 cities in 51 countries on five continents.

We look forward to flying with you.



Thomas G. Plaskett  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer  
Pan American World Airways, Inc.

# PAN AM®



# Plain-speaking Major makes his break from Thatcher style

JOHN Major is learning to surmount the problem of how she would have done it. He has now tackled a European summit, a Washington bilateral with President Bush and a swing through the Middle East, with a timetable just as packed as the schedules his predecessor used to inflict on her travelling corps.

It has been a tough start. Few prime ministers are pitched within weeks into facing British troops to explain why they may have to risk their lives within days. Mr Major came well through that psychological barrier, and his day in the desert with the forces did him good. They liked his plain man's pitch and it began to relax the physical tautness that has been his only sign of nerves so far.

At the European summit, his

"charm offensive" bought Britain a little time in the community, and he impressed continental politicians and journalists with his grasp of detail. At Camp David, he seemed to have made the necessary breakthrough with Mr Bush, who shares Mr Major's obvious distaste for the basic manoeuvres of politics.

The next real test will be an early spring trip to Moscow to see President Gorbachev, the man Margaret Thatcher discovered for the West and with whom she developed a particular chemistry. Being a woman helped her — and there is little that Mr Major can do about that.

Physical impressions do count. The head-boy spectacles and disciplined slim figure still clearly come as a shock to some who meet

**The prime minister, on a tour of the Middle East, has coped well with a difficult debut in world affairs, writes Robin Oakley, from Cairo, assessing John Major's emerging image**

him. Ironically, in this diet-conscious age, another half-stone might do Mr Major no harm. But he compensates by his approachability and lack of flannel. People find him easy to talk to and comment on the unexpected warmth of his smile. He seems to find time for everybody.

It would be an exaggeration to say that Mr Major is consciously developing his own style. He doesn't believe in that. To the consternation of photographers, he abhors artifice. He would not

put on a sailor's hat on board HMS London. He would not even turn his head to be profiled against the fleet drawn up for review in the Gulf.

Never mind Mrs Thatcher's instinctive eye for a camera angle. Mr Major is a straight man who wants to go on playing it straight, and the media should give him the chance to do so.

In all his foreign trips, Mr Major has concentrated on a few essentials. In the Middle East he was concerned to do three things.

First, he wanted to convince what he believed to be a still-doubting Saddam Hussein that the allies were not bluffing about the use of force and that he could not possibly hope to win a conflict. Hence the boasting about the awesome allied air power. It was a difficult task to perform without sounding like a warmonger, but he struck the balance by emphasising that Britain was not thirsting for anything other than a peaceful settlement.

Second, he wanted to convince the Iraqis that partial withdrawal would not be enough to spare them the full onslaught from the Allies.

Third, he wanted to explain to British troops why they were there. He argued the moral necessity of rescuing a small country

from a vicious invader. No small nation with an aggressive larger neighbour would be safe in future if Saddam were allowed to gain in the face of worldwide condemnation, he said.

Mr Major has said less on the question of why force had to be used so soon when sanctions appeared to be working, but he believes that the daily rape and torture in Kuwait cannot be tolerated longer, that a delay would have enabled Saddam to strengthen his military position, and that the credibility of the UN resolutions would have filtered away.

The final aim of the visits to Sheikh Jaber Ahmed al-Sabah, the Emir of Kuwait, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, Sultan Qaboos of Oman, and President Mubarak of

Egypt was to urge the Arab nations into thinking much more about the future shape of Middle East security arrangements, once Kuwait has been freed. It was clear that little thinking had been done on the security structure after a war.

Mr Major is convinced that any large non-Arab standing force is not a credible option. Nor could Britain and America afford it. This problem will remain even if Saddam does pull out at the last minute.

President Bush and Mr Major have promised no attack if Saddam withdraws. But once he had been put back in his box with all his chemical, biological and, eventually, nuclear weapons, what would be required to keep him there?

## France and Algeria keep up momentum for Gulf initiative

From PHILIP JACOBSON IN PARIS

INTENSE diplomatic activity involving France and Algeria has strengthened speculation that the two countries are considering a Gulf peace initiative.

At the weekly meeting of France's council of ministers yesterday, Roland Dumas, the foreign minister, said that France would throw every diplomatic resource into the search for peace in the Gulf "right up to the last moment provided for by the UN Security Council".

The dispatch of a senior Elysée Palace official to Algiers on Tuesday was followed by the visit to Paris yesterday of the Algerian foreign minister, who insisted that there was still time to avoid war. According to Sid Ahmed Ghozali, his government has maintained direct contact with Baghdad since the confrontation began. "We know the Iraqis absolutely do not want war but talks and negotiation."

French newspapers were speculating yesterday that Mr Ghoz-

ali's presence was linked to a message Mitterrand has sent to President Chadli Benjedid of Algeria. The message was delivered by the secretary-general of the Elysée. It is understood to say that Iraq is assured of an international conference on the Israeli-Arab question if it first begins to evacuate Kuwait.

The Algerians believe that only the promise of such a conference can persuade President Saddam Hussein to take the first step towards peace. Although France and Algeria agree that there is no possibility of Middle East talks opening simultaneously with an Iraqi withdrawal, it is accepted that Baghdad would expect a binding guarantee — perhaps backed by the European Community as well as Arab states.

Algeria's credentials as trustworthy negotiators in the most delicate of Middle Eastern affairs, from terrorist hijackings to the release of Western hostages, make Mr Chadli an attractive partner

for any joint initiative with France.

Last month he met Saddam in Baghdad, later visiting Mitterrand in Paris. It is believed that he told the French that Saddam was still open to a compromise that included the international conference.

Some observers in Paris wonder whether last weekend's long meeting between the Iraqi leader and Michel Vauzelle — the French politician with close links to the Elysée — was intended to test Saddam's position. Soon after returning, M Vauzelle called for a Franco-Arab initiative.

"There are two types of country from which Saddam is awaiting action," M Vauzelle said. "France, with whom he has enjoyed a 15-year partnership, and certain Arab states." Rumours are circulating that Mitterrand's old confidant, the foreign minister, Roland Dumas, may be sent to Baghdad. He will meet Arab ambassadors today, including those from Iraq and Kuwait, in Paris.

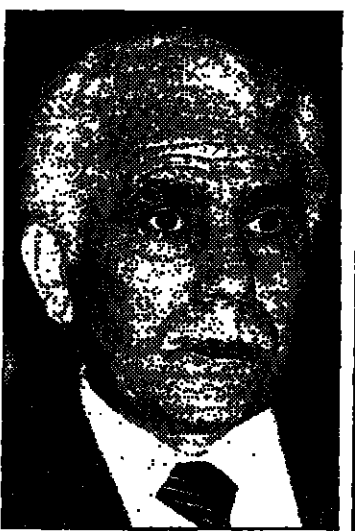
● **TUNIS** — Staff of the American embassy and ordinary Americans are leaving Algeria because of death threats from pro-Iraqi Muslim extremist groups, Western diplomats in Tunis said. The British embassy, too, has received similar hate mail (Penny Gibbins writes).

Diplomatic sources in Algiers said that the letters from Islamic fundamentalists threatened to kill not only their embassy staff but also ordinary British and American citizens if war breaks out.

Fears for their safety increased after calls from Algeria's ruling party for anti-Western demonstrations if war is declared. Ahmed Ben Bella, the former president, had said earlier that the embassies were legitimate targets for demonstration.

The sources confirmed that the Americans have begun sending non-essential staff and dependants out of Algeria. But the American embassy said there had been no official ruling from Washington to begin evacuating staff.

Conor Cruise O'Brien, page 12  
Diary, page 12  
Leading article, page 13



Benjedid: received message from President Mitterrand



Firm alliance: John Major and President Mubarak of Egypt shaking hands in Cairo yesterday during the prime minister's brief stopover to discuss developments in the Gulf

## Briton in Baghdad court

A Welshman who disappeared in Iraq after the invasion of Kuwait is expected to appear in a Baghdad court today, accused of trying to leave the country illegally (Michael Knipe writes).

He is Patrick Trigg, aged 54, who works for McAlpine's, the construction company. Mr Trigg, an Arabic speaker, has spent several years working in Iraq. Sources in Whitehall said that the Iraqis had previously assured the British government that it was not holding him.

Mr Trigg's wife, Sylvia, said yesterday that it appeared her husband had been held in solitary confinement after making an unsuccessful attempt to escape from Iraq four months ago, when the Iraqi authorities were preventing Westerners from leaving.

Mrs Trigg said that there were unconfirmed reports that her husband had been taken to the Iraqi port city of Basra as part of President Saddam Hussein's "human shield" plan to place Westerners in strategic sites to prevent an attack by the multinational forces in the Gulf.

She said: "Until the Foreign Office rang me today, I had absolutely nothing official as to whether Patrick was alive or dead." Mrs Trigg said that she believed the Baghdad court would deport her husband. "It is the news we have waited for for months," she added.

The Foreign Office could not confirm that Mr Trigg would be deported. An official said: "The embassy in Baghdad is in contact with the Iraqi authorities and we are doing all we can."

## EC renews offer on Aziz meeting

From PETER GUILFORD IN BRUSSELS

THE European Community has offered once again to meet Tariq Aziz before the January 15 United Nations deadline to give the Iraqi foreign minister "an explanation face to face" in a final attempt to avert war in the Gulf, according to Jacques Poos, the foreign minister of Luxembourg and current EC president. Baghdad, which has already turned down one offer from the Europeans, had yet to respond to the fresh request last night.

EC officials in Brussels confirmed separately yesterday that the offer had been lodged with Iraq. No date has been fixed and the agenda would depend on America and Iraq's assessment of their talks in Geneva yesterday. M Poos said the most likely venue would be Algeria. Speaking to reporters during a visit to Luxembourg by King Hussein of Jordan, who is touring European capitals in an effort to drum up backing for a separate Arab peace initiative, M Poos said there would be no change of position.

This was confirmed by co-ordinators of the Community's foreign policy, who said the proposed European move "would not differ in language" from the US position. Instead, it would be merely a "last effort from the European side to sort things out".

If Iraq accepts the offer, it would be the foreign ministers of Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands — the past, present and future EC presidencies — who would be present at talks with Mr Aziz.

Britain's support for the initiative appeared lukewarm last night, but one official confirmed that "if there is general agreement, we

may go along with it". Political directors who coordinate the foreign policy of the 12 EC states may be asked to give the offer their formal stamp of approval when they meet in Luxembourg today.

This prompted fears that Luxembourg may have acted hastily by confirming the offer before the Geneva talks had finished. But officials from the Community's "political cooperation" body said that Luxembourg, Italy and the Netherlands would not have made the proposal without prior signs of agreement from Britain and the rest of the Community.

The Netherlands' apparent support for the initiative is significant, as the Hague shares Britain's fears that independent European diplomacy could be read by Saddam Hussein as a crack in the armour of the coalition ranged against him.

The Foreign Office did not immediately confirm its support for the EC initiative, saying it expected political directors meeting in Luxembourg today to judge how best to act after Geneva.

"There is no problem in principle with talking to Iraq. It is a matter of how best to make a contribution," officials said. Any such meeting should deliver the same message as before: that Iraq should leave Kuwait, and be assured that if it did so it would not be attacked.

In Brussels, EC foreign policy officials said a mandate to propose talks with Iraq without seeking renewed consent from its EC partners, provided it could find a venue other than Baghdad.

## GPs may treat wounded

By JILL SHERMAN  
SOCIAL SERVICES  
CORRESPONDENT

FAMILY doctors and volunteers may be called into NHS hospitals to help with war casualties from the Gulf.

A health department circular, restricted to senior officers, explains contingency plans for treating the wounded. It admits that defence ministry hospitals would be able to cope with casualties for only the first 24 hours after the outbreak of war.

From the second day of hostilities, NHS hospitals all over England would have to be prepared to accept the war wounded by making 60-70 beds available each day for five days. Each region should be prepared to accept 500 admissions, the circular says.

"Hospitals, if stretched, may be able to call on family health service authorities for local GPs' assistance to offset staff shortages," says the document. In addition, managers are advised to draw up policies for volunteers to help receive, transport or treat casualties. This could include asking trained former members of staff to stand by.

A health department spokesman admitted that thousands of routine hospital operations may have to be cancelled if war does break out.

## Man in the news Enigmatic survivor of Iraqi intrigues

By MICHAEL KNIFE, DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

TARIQ Aziz's ground-breaking meeting with James Baker yesterday demonstrated anew the remarkable degree of trust placed in him by President Saddam Hussein.

In the suspicion-ridden ranks of Middle East diplomacy and Iraqi power politics, this Christian former schoolteacher has retained the confidence of his master, the self-appointed strongman of the Muslim world, with extraordinary effectiveness. There appears to have been no doubt in the mind of the Iraqi leader that Mr Aziz could best handle the crucial direct contact with the Americans. For more than a decade, he has been Saddam's primary link with the international community, surviving the travails of internal skulduggery and Gulf war assassination attempts with aplomb.

There were rumours a week after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait that Mr Aziz had been removed from office and possibly executed for opposing the action, but he soon re-emerged, faithfully expressing his master's rationale for an act of unprovoked aggression that shocked friend and foe alike.

Despite the years he has spent meeting leading statesmen on the

circuit of international diplomacy, wheeling and dealing with close Eastern and Western allies such as the Soviet Union and France, and bartering in the diplomatic bazaars of the Arab world with the Syrians, Egyptians and Libyans, nobody appears to have penetrated his suave demeanour sufficiently to detect whether his personal beliefs vary from those of his master.

Mr Aziz spent the Gulf war years presenting a relatively moderate and reasonable image of the Iraqi leadership to the Western world. When questioned about the regime's use of chemical weapons against its Kurdish population, he simply denied it.

He presents a sophisticated image, wearing smart Western suits, enjoying good cigars and speaking excellent English. Although he is not a member of the Iraqi leader's inner circle, which consists almost entirely of members of Saddam's own Tikriti clan, Mr Aziz is the only Christian on the key ruling bodies in Iraq — the Revolutionary Command Council, the Iraqi wing of the ruling Baath Party, and the government.

Mr Aziz is a Chaldean Catholic, a minority group within Iraq's minority Christian community and whose adherents still speak a dialect of the ancient Aramaic language reputed to have been the language of Christ. He grew up in the village of Tell Kaif, near the northern city of Mosul in the foothills of the Kurdish mountains, in an area that was a centre of Arab nationalism 40 years ago.

His family moved to Baghdad, where he studied English literature at the capital's college of fine arts. He became a teacher and joined the Baath party and at one stage was in a faction of the party in opposition to that of Saddam. After the armed forces ousted the Baathists in 1963, Mr Aziz developed links with the faction inside the party that had its origin in the central town of Tikrit, Saddam's home town.

In 1968, after the Baath party seized power, he became editor of the regime's *Al-Thawra* newspaper, then information minister five years later and foreign minister in 1983. In that role he played an important part in securing Western political and military support for Baghdad in its war with the Iranians.

## Pilot dies in crash

Saudi Arabia — An American air force F16 fighter-bomber crashed on a night training flight in northern Saudi Arabia and the pilot was killed, a military statement said. The crash brought to 99 the death toll among American forces in the Gulf. A British F4 Phantom fighter-bomber on a training flight crashed in the Mediterranean off Cyprus but both pilots ejected safely, a British military spokesman said. (Reuters)

## Iran stays neutral

Tehran — Iran will stay neutral if fighting erupts in the Gulf and it will not allow either side to use its airspace, sea or land, according to Rear Admiral Abbas Mohtaj, the deputy commander of Iran's navy. He said a Gulf clash was inevitable if Iraq refused to withdraw from Kuwait. "We will not allow either of the sides involved to use our air, sea and land spaces against the other," he said. Iran has been equally critical of Western military build-up. (AFP)

## Call for jihad



Sheikh Assad Bayuth al-Timimi, above, a religious leader of the Palestinian organisation Hamas, gesturing during an address to a meeting of the International Islamic Conference in Baghdad yesterday. He called on Muslims from all over the world to launch a jihad, or holy war, against "all traitors and infidels led by the United States".

## Epidemic alert

Abu Dhabi — Arab health ministers yesterday accused Iraq of destroying health services in Kuwait. The ministers, representing countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council excluding Iraq, said the emirate faced epidemics of cholera and other contagious diseases. (AP)

## Arab leaders talk of peace but ship out gold

WHILE publicly speaking of their hopes for peace, Arab leaders in the Gulf states have been making preparations for war.

To protect their wealth and property, unprecedented consignments of gold bullion are said to be on their way for safekeeping in Europe and the United States. The merchants of Dubai, many of whom are of Iranian origin, are considering an offer from Iran to send their valuables to Tehran for storage until the conflict has been resolved.

In Tehran this week, the highest-ranking Iraqi delegation to visit the country since the Islamic revolution of 1979 talked of "a strategic alliance". The delegation was given such a warm welcome by Iranian officials that it visibly disgusted the many families of men killed in the eight-year Iran-Iraq war.

At the same time, the Iranian army was

preparing for large-scale exercises near its border with Iraq to prevent any fighting between Iraq and the multinational force from spilling over into its territory.

Iraq, which has condemned the presence of Western troops in Saudi Arabia in more vehement terms than it has used to describe Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, is reliably learnt to have told the United States and Britain to overthrow President Saddam Hussein without delay, as well as to leave the area promptly.

However, Tehran issued a warning to the Western allies yesterday not to bomb any of Iraq's Shia holy sites. This will be quite easy to observe, at least during daylight, since most of the shrines have large domes covered with gold leaf, which shine brightly.

Meanwhile, it is not in any doubt that Saddam, the man who gassed the Kurdish

city of Halabja in 1988, has become a Muslim religious hero.

In Pakistan yesterday, many were surprised when a government minister broke ranks with his colleagues to condemn Saudi Arabia's decision to request help against Saddam. Maulana Abdus-Sattar Khan Niazi, a cleric who heads the ministry of local government, accused the United States of wanting to grab the oil fields of the region. Pakistan, a close ally of Saudi Arabia, has dispatched 15,000 men to join the allied forces. Washington has urged all US citizens to leave Pakistan before January 15.

In Syria, Shell and Marathon oil companies, respectively of The Netherlands and America, have begun evacuating their staff. Lufthansa, the German airline, announced that it would no longer station any personnel in

Damascus. Altogether, more than 15 airlines have now stopped or restricted flights to the region.

A bright spot is that the conflict has helped to inject fresh life in the media in the region. The hitherto timid press in Saudi Arabia has been allowed more freedom, making it a more interesting read. The Egyptian press has gathered a new following everywhere. Where censorship blocks Egyptian newspapers from reaching regional capitals, Cairo Radio is being listened to attentively. Hours are being devoted to almost unrestrained discussions of the conflict between newspaper editors, and the broadcasts make riveting listening. Iraqis risk imprisonment if they tune in, though Saddam himself is known to be an avid listener.

**Hazhir Teimourian**





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3. If you do notice something wrong with the car, carry on if possible and stop anywhere there's lots of people and a phone.

4. If you're an AA member, tell us you're a

woman alone. We'll make getting to you top priority (as would any reputable motoring organisation).

5. If your car does leave you marooned, never ever try to hitch a lift.

6. Instead raise your bonnet, and switch on your hazard warning lights. Unless there's a clear danger of collision, stay inside your car, lock all doors and windows and wait for help.

7. If someone stops, ask for assistance through the closed window, unless you're absolutely sure you can trust them (eg. police, AA or RAC patrol).

8. On motorways, pull over onto the hard shoulder and make immediately for the nearest

roadside telephone. Return to your car but don't get back in. Ten per cent of all fatal motorway accidents actually happen on the hard shoulder.

9. Remember, these are only guidelines, and they simply can't cover every eventuality. Your best guideline is to stay calm, and think clearly.

10. The AA has assisted in the production of a cassette for women which covers these breakdown guidelines, and how to deal with harassment.

You can buy a copy at any AA shop\*. You can get the security of AA membership for you or your loved ones there, or wherever you see the "Join here" sign, or simply call 0800 91 95 95 now.

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هكذا من الأصل



# Japan seeks to heal rift in relations with South Korea

By JOE JOSEPH IN TOKYO AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

TOSHIKI Kaifu, the Japanese prime minister, is expected to announce in Seoul today that Tokyo will stop fingerprinting Japan's 700,000 Korean residents within two years. The policing system forces them to live like stateless aliens in a country which, in most cases, is the only home they know. The long-awaited gesture will begin to heal one of the most festering wounds in Japanese-Korean relations. Ties between Tokyo and Seoul have been soured by Japan's colonisation of the Korean peninsula between 1910 and 1945. Tokyo's belated apologies for the harshness of its rule have done little to put Koreans in a forgiving mood. In central Seoul yesterday, 4,500 riot police and groups of protesters greeted Mr Kaifu's arrival for a two-day visit.

The Japanese leader said: "I want to take a major step towards building good relations between the two countries so that they can be called truly close neighbours. The time is ripe for Japan to establish relations with South Korea that look to the future." In a meeting yesterday with President Roh of South Korea, the two leaders agreed to work together for greater stability in Northeast Asia, especially on the Korean peninsula. Mr Kaifu pledged to keep Seoul informed about Tokyo's plans to start negotiations with North Korea later this month towards normalising ties. However, President

Roh gave a warning that North Korea might be less interested in dialogue with South Korea once it normalises ties with Japan and obtains financial aid from Tokyo.

A Japanese spokesman quoted Mr Kaifu as saying that Tokyo would consider Seoul's reservations, particularly its concern about Pyongyang's nuclear capability.

During their talks yesterday, the two also agreed to join forces to help reforms succeed in the Soviet Union. A South Korean spokesman said that the two countries would co-operate in shipping consumer goods to the Soviet Union.

The thorny issues of the legal status of Koreans — many of whom were brought to Japan as forced labour — and South Korea's chronic trade imbalance with Japan will be discussed today. Mr Kaifu is expected to tell President Roh that after 1993 South Korean residents of Japan will no longer have to show up regularly to have their index fingers inked, instead submitting a photograph and registering locally.

Tokyo is also said to be willing to allow Korean residents to work as civil servants in local government and to lecture in state schools, although they will still be refused jobs as full-time teachers. But Japanese officials will probably demand that Koreans first take Japanese na-

tionalism. Some Korean residents, as well as Europeans, Americans and other foreigners who have to carry an alien's card bearing their fingerprint, have refused to accept the indignity and have staged a ten-year legal battle against the practice.

Mr Kaifu will have another chance to gauge the level of Korea's animosity today when he visits Pagoda Park in Seoul. The park, taken over by protesters yesterday, was the site of a 1919 Korean proclamation of independence from Japanese rule that set off an insurrection, brutally suppressed. Mr Kaifu will be visiting the park to show his regret for the past.

His regional diplomatic offensive will take him on Sunday on a seven-day tour of Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, the Philippines and Thailand.

PEKING: Japan will urge the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank to lend money to China, provided Peking genuinely pursues reforms, Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Japanese finance minister, said here yesterday.

Mr Hashimoto's visit is the most important from Japan since the killing of unarmed demonstrators in Tiananmen Square in June 1989, and represents a further step towards normalisation of ties.



History class: Mphahlele Ramake, left, a black pupil attending her first day at Parkview senior, a former whites-only government school, in Johannesburg. Racial segregation in the state education system was eased yesterday for the first time in South Africa

## De Klerk reform plan begins to pay dividends

From GAVIN BELL IN JOHANNESBURG

A CRUCIAL year for South Africa has begun on a positive note, with cautious optimism prevailing among politicians, economists and sports fans. After the tumultuous events of last year, President de Klerk's reform initiatives are beginning to pay dividends in all fields.

Despite a continuing high level of political violence in black communities, the main parties have agreed on the

need for a broad-based congress to work out the mechanics of drafting a post-apartheid constitution.

Dr Gerrit Viljoen, Pretoria's chief negotiator, has welcomed a proposal to this effect by the African National Congress, and senior government sources privately hailed it as a breakthrough. The ANC's suggestion that the all-party conference might eventually form the basis of a constituent assembly is not far removed from the government's view of how the process should

unfold. The Democratic party, representing white liberals, is keen to participate, and Mangosuthu Buthelezi, leader of the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom party, has expressed qualified approval.

The only negative response so far has come from the far-right Conservative party, which rejected it as a step towards black dictatorship. However, the Conservatives may yet be persuaded to join the negotiations with assurances that Afrikaner interests will be protected. President de

Klerk is due to announce measures to repeal remaining apartheid legislation at the opening of parliament in Cape Town on February 1, and it is hoped that all-party talks might begin in May.

The hard-pressed economy, which has a direct bearing on political developments, has meanwhile received a badly needed boost from British and other European bankers. Economists say financial sanctions began crumbling six months ago and inflow of trade-related finance is now

running at a high level. In some cases, the availability of credit facilities exceeds the requirements of local banks.

A spokesman for one bank said up to £50 million could be raised with one telephone call. "This time last year, that just could not be done," he said.

In a country fanatical about sport, an impending visit by Sam Ramsamy, executive chairman of the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee, has raised hopes of a return to international competition.

## Amnesty accuses Senegal of torture

Amnesty International says the Senegalese government appears to have given security forces a virtual blank cheque to torture and kill people in the southern Casamance region, where rebels are fighting for independence.

The London-based human rights group adds that since last June hundreds of people have been arrested in Casamance, where the Movement of Casamance's Democratic Forces is waging a guerrilla war against the government, and in other parts of Senegal. It adds that "reports of extrajudicial executions have emerged for the first time since 1983".

The Senegalese embassy in London said that it would not comment until it had seen the report.

## Peking trial

Peking — Posters have gone up outside the Intermediate Court here announcing the trials of four more students charged with counter-revolutionary crimes. The court has repeatedly refused foreign journalists access to the trials.

## Ethics plea

Denver — Neil Bush, son of the American president, was accused by prosecutors of a failed savings bank. They said he should get business ethics training before working in banking again. (Reuters)

## Petrol ban

Hanoi — Vietnam has banned vehicles from travelling more than 300 miles to save fuel in its campaign to cope with rising oil prices, brought on by the Gulf confrontation, and loss of cheap supplies from the Soviet Union. (Reuters)

## Indian parents defy bar on sex-testing

From CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

INDIA is trying to control sex determination tests, widely used by women who are under pressure from husbands and families to produce sons.

India's male-female population ratio is increasingly lopsided because of the widespread use of selective abortions and the age-old rural practice of leaving newborn girls to die.

The government plans to introduce legislation controlling the use of amniocentesis, properly used for the determination of foetal defects but in India mostly employed to establish sex. The move has outraged some women, particularly from poor families, who regard it as their right to choose the sex of their child. Maharashtra, whose capital is Bombay, is the only state to

## Somali capital 'rife with disease'

From ASSOCIATED PRESS IN NAIROBI

ITALY yesterday evacuated about 165 foreigners from the Somali capital, Mogadishu, which rebels say is rife with disease from decomposing bodies that litter the streets.

More than 1,500 people have been killed in 11 days of fighting between guerrillas and government forces, the rebels say. Yesterday, they claimed to be in control of most of Mogadishu and on the verge of victory. Many buildings in the smoke-filled capital, which was hit by gun and rocket fire, were destroyed or damaged by shelling, evacuees said.

The Italian embassy said that a Roman Catholic cathedral was engulfed in flames. It was not known what caused the fire or what happened to the people who had taken refuge there.

The rebels said Mogadishu was suffering from an "explosion" of cholera, typhoid and other epidemics, and appealed for medical and food aid. The whereabouts of President Siad Barre remained unknown. The Italian foreign ministry said it believed he still was in Mogadishu, but rebels claimed he fled earlier this week to Abu Dhabi.

Gianni De Michelis, the Italian foreign minister, said in Rome that his country was considering sending about 100 soldiers to guard its embassy in Mogadishu. However, a spokesman for the United Somali Congress said the rebels opposed such a move.

State-run Somali radio broadcast briefly on Tuesday to say that government officials had been holding meetings since Monday to discuss and a ceasefire.

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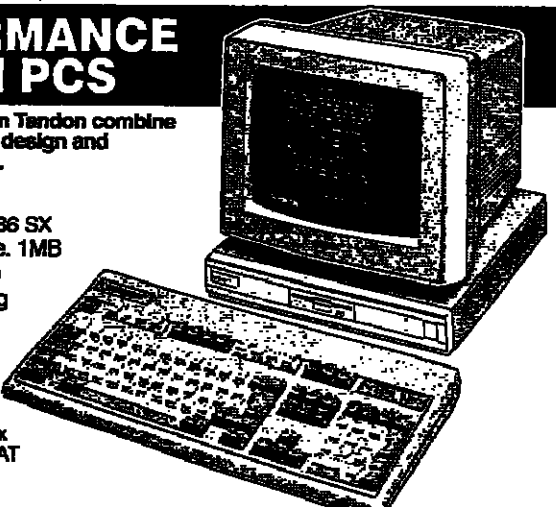
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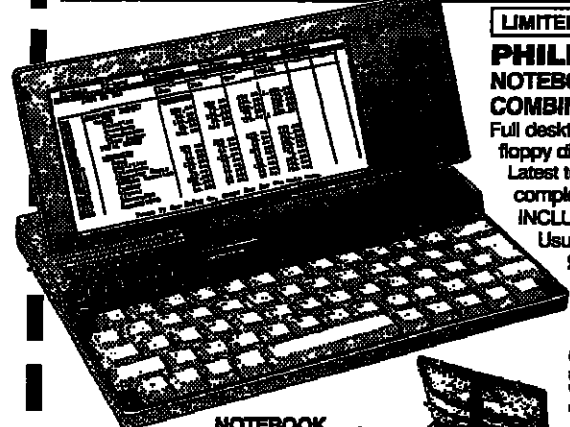
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## Lead us not into war

Conor Cruise O'Brien

In a letter about the Gulf to *The Times* last week, the Bishop of Salisbury wrote: "If we refuse, on the eve of such a conflict, to sit down with the enemy, to hear with an open mind what he has to say, and to search sincerely for even the tiniest chance of some peaceful resolution, that will be a mortal sin for which those responsible will one day have to answer to God."

That statement is the nearest I have seen from a modern Christian clergyman to an Islamic *fatwa*. The bishop, like the ayatollahs, assumes that his functions as a religious teacher endow him with authority also in the political sphere. He prescribes a particular political course, and then invokes a spiritual sanction against any persons who do not follow it.

This is unjust. There are those who believe that the course prescribed by the bishop would actually increase the chances of war, that probably the only chance of avoiding it is to convince Saddam that war will follow if his forces remain in Kuwait. Peace initiatives, they believe, merely suggest to Saddam that he can hold on to Kuwait with impunity. Thus, the course prescribed by the bishop actually tilts the balance towards war.

The case against the bishop's prescription may perhaps be mistaken – though I think it is not – but it is at least serious enough to be sincerely believed, by competent and well-informed people who would like to avoid war without condoning or rewarding aggression. Even if they are shown to be in error politically, they cannot fairly be treated as morally delinquent. Indeed, if they believe the case I have outlined, it is their duty to act on it.

There is a legitimate conflict of political opinion here, and the bishop should not invoke his spiritual authority to bolster his side of a political argument. Few of us are attached to either the medieval Christian or the modern Muslim precedents for the fusion of religious and political authority.

Would-be peace-makers such as Ted Heath, Tony Benn and the Bishop of Salisbury forget that, historically, the existence of a strong inclination for peace, unevenly distributed between two parties to an international dispute, has been among the factors leading to the outbreak of war. The classic case is the Rhineland in March, 1936. The powers victorious in 1918 then had an overwhelming military superiority over Germany, so the German general staff advised against remilitarisation of the Rhineland. Hitler decided that he could remilitarise and get away with it, because public opinion in Britain and France was so peace-minded that it would not tolerate any military reaction, even against

so clear a violation of the Treaty of Versailles. Unfortunately for many millions of people, Hitler was right, with the help of the peace-minded, the world was set on "course" towards the second world war.

Saddam's gamble over Kuwait is closely comparable. He believes that his opponents, powerful though they are, lack the stomach for a fight. He said as much to the American ambassador in Baghdad on the eve of his annexation of Kuwait, and his subsequent actions show that he clings to that belief. Those who encourage him in it, impeccable as their intentions are, will share the responsibility for the coming war.

President Bush will share the responsibility too, because of his administration's failure to send clear signals to Saddam before the annexation of Kuwait. If Saddam had then received an unequivocal warning that an attack would be regarded as an infringement of America's vital interests, he would probably have held back. Instead he received, through the American ambassador, an assurance that America did not take sides in a dispute between Arab states. With that green light, he invaded.

Since the invasion, Bush too has sometimes seemed to have difficulty in formulating what the crisis is all about. Last week, however, he showed what is at stake. "Every day that passes," he said, "brings Saddam further on the road to developing biological and nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them. If Saddam corners the world energy market, he can then finance further aggression, terror and blackmail."

Although the reported defection of Iraqi helicopter crews has proved groundless, clear signals of allied determination would make a definite impact on the Iraqi armed forces. But it is the contrary signals from Congress, President Mitterrand and Jacques Poes, the Luxembourg foreign minister – to which British listeners are attuned.

In Britain, the most unfortunate development as the days to the UN deadline run out has been the defection of the Labour party from its position of full support for action authorised by UN resolutions to one of waiting indefinitely for economic sanctions to work – or not, as the case might be. It is Tony Benn, not Mr. Kinnoch, who has emerged as the effective leader of the Labour party in this hour of crisis. The consequences of Mr. Kinnoch's defection will probably include the eclipse of the Labour party in the aftermath of victory. That is the least part of the price that will have to be paid for the efforts of would-be peace-makers who have failed to take account of the probable consequences of their well-intentioned activities. But let us acquit each other, at least, of "mortal sin".

...and moreover

## CLEMENT FREUD

When it comes to recounting our prowess, the older we get the better we used to be. Every now and then one of us (and by "us" I mean those on the crematorium side of 50) edges out of his bathchair to make a point and the rest of us sit back and say "There, see?"

Piggott did it last November. At the age of 54 he returned to show the world that his athleticism, skill, balance and will-to-win had not declined, and we weren't surprised.

After the great jockey's success in America, I myself considered some late flourish – a game of mixed hockey, entering for the London Marathon – but one thing and another, getting the doctor to do something about my left knee which has seized up again, preparing for a journey to Wigan – caused me to postpone a return to active participation.

Until Sunday. I was at an excellent hotel in the New Forest, went on a tour of the premises and ended up in their new health club. A gymnasium called Miss Coveney showed me around, explained the computerised walking and cycling machines, enthused over the muscle-building appliances, and later I sat myself on a low roller-seat in front of a TV screen with my feet strapped in loops, my hands firmly gripping a toe-bar as a sculler might grip a pair of oars. I told my mentor that I could manage on my own, showing off is not my way. (Perhaps this is a good time to explain that rowing was not actually one of my major sports, though I once coxed a parliamentary eight on the Thames, not realising that out in the elements, only stroke could hear what I was saying; as a consequence we never got close enough to the other boat to start a proper race.)

At the health club the message on the screen advised "Press start when you are ready to begin". The illuminated buttons were situated just beyond my feet, and as there is no way that people built to my specifications can reach that far from a sedentary perch, I re-

leased my feet from the restraining yoke, got up, leaned forward and touched the requisite light. I then resumed my seat and re-engaged my feet in the loops.

The screen showed "Starting Position": a green silhouette of a Colin Moynihan-sized oarsman with a straight back, knees tucked beneath his chin, hands stretched forward. I did what I could. "Start extending legs" came next, no trouble. Then "Extend legs and start pulling"; it was a doddle.

"Are you familiar with this machine?" asked the screen; "Press Yes or No." I withdrew my feet from their restraints, pushed myself up (this is really terrific exercise) leaned down and pressed "No".

So the machine explained: I could row at between 25 and 45 strokes per minute, for one minute up to 60, at standards between elementary and expert to a programme devised by them or one created by me. I slumped for two minutes at Olympic standard on a difficult quotient of 15 at 45 spm. It seemed unambitious to aim for less.

When I pressed the "Start" button the screen asked if I was ready, advised me to get set and fired a gun to denote "Go". There was the sound of wind and waves reminiscent of that day on the Thames, and up came a picture of two boats, mine and the pacer which was racing off in front. "Keep your back straight" admonished the screen. "Stretch your legs", and after about 15 seconds "You are 10 lengths behind". The two boats were now separated by the width of the screen; with a minute and a half to go – "Keep your back straight. Extend your legs" – I was 25 lengths in arrears. A helicopter flew over the scene and started to shoot, a whale appeared and then the screen went blank, possibly in disgust, leaving only the heartening message: "If you feel pain, faint, dizzy or short of breath, stop rowing."

Miss Coveney came back and asked whether I would now care to sit down and try to row; I said I would try the cream tea in the hotel lounge instead.

After the Cannon Street crash, Michael Jones-Lee urges BR to adopt the roads approach

## Put a hard cash price on rail safety

Has British Rail's relentless pursuit of profit led to cold-blooded neglect of passenger safety? The Cannon Street crash on Tuesday will fuel the claim that the answer is yes. Those of a more reflective disposition, however, will be aware that in terms of passenger deaths and serious injury per mile travelled, rail is second only to air in terms of safety. The chances of death or serious injury in car travel are 20 times higher.

The first point that tends to be missed in the understandably emotional response to a major accident is that safety does not come free. The more we spend on safety, the less is available for everything else; in the case of British Rail, for example, for station modernisation, furnishing and cleaning carriages, or investment in automation, to improve punctuality. Choices have to be made in trading off safety improvements against other ways in which scarce resources and limited income might be used. The question is how such choices can best be made.

I believe that safety benefits must be given explicit monetary

values so that they can be weighed directly against other benefits and costs in allocating BR's overall investment budget. Safety improvements would then be carried out up to (but only up to) the point at which the additional value they afford exceeds the cost of providing them. Expenditure beyond this point would be unwarranted, in the sense that more investment in safety would displace expenditure on things regarded by the public as being of greater value.

The outcome of such a procedure would depend upon the way monetary values of safety improvements were defined and estimated. Until recently it was fashionable to focus on the losses of output or income that result from death and injury (known as the output approach). Thus, for example, the monetary value of avoiding a person's premature death was defined in terms of the amount he or she would produce over the remainder of his or her working life.

The obvious objection to this is that most of us want more safety, not less, principally because of our aversion to death and injury per se,

rather than because of our desire to protect current and future productive potential. So it has been argued that values of safety should be defined to protect people's pure preference for safety as such. More specifically, a natural measure of a person's preference for anything is the amount he or she is prepared to pay for it.

This reflects not only the person's relative valuation of the desired good or service, but his ability to pay – which is in turn a reflection of the constraints of society's overall resources. Thus, under what has become known as the willingness-to-pay approach, one attempts first to determine the sum that those affected would individually be willing to pay for (typically small) improvements in their own and others' safety. These sums are then added up across all individuals affected by a particular safety improvement to arrive at its overall monetary value. The resultant figure reflects what the safety improvement is worth to the affected group.

Not surprisingly, the willingness-to-pay approach has produced

values of safety that are substantially larger than their output-based counterparts. In 1988, when the Department of Transport abandoned its output-based approach to the valuation of avoidance of a road fatality in favour of the willingness-to-pay approach, the figure concerned doubled. With the value of avoiding fatality now put at £650,000 on the basis of willingness-to-pay, one may expect a substantial shift in the balance between safety and other effects, such as time savings, in the expenditure of the road budget. However, because willingness-to-pay values reflect the preferences of affected members of the public, such a shift will be entirely justified.

What sort of implications would the willingness-to-pay approach have for BR safety expenditure levels? Would it confirm the critics' claims that British Rail woefully under-spends on safety, or would we discover that things are about right? Might it even be the case that in relation to what its passengers would individually be prepared to pay for safety, BR is now spending too much?

The short, if disturbing answer to these questions is that currently nobody knows. This is so because, in contrast to the Department of Transport's cost-benefit appraisal of road projects, which takes explicit account of safety benefits in the manner described above, British Rail's current appraisal procedures are narrowly focused on purely financial considerations, with no corresponding cost-benefit calculations.

This, of course, is not to say that safety benefits are ignored in British Rail's investment decision-making process – they are a very real factor in the safety standards imposed by engineers and the transport department's Railways Inspectorate.

However, because it fails to conduct specific cost-benefit analyses, British Rail has no way of knowing how the levels of passenger safety that result from application of safety standards compare with the levels that would result if careful account were taken of passengers' preferences. It is high time it did.

The author is Professor of Economics at Newcastle University.

## Experts in the self-evident

Bernard Levin marvels at the diligent research of an EC offshoot in finding out what the world could have told it

I bet you have never heard of the European Community Court of Auditors, and I bet you even more that you cannot guess what it does for a living, or where it does it. The where is easily answered: Luxembourg, presumably because it was Belgium's turn last time and Holland's the time before. The what is more remarkable: it is no use trying to claim the money by saying "it audits", because although that is of course what it does, much more precision is needed. What exactly the European Community Court of Auditors does for a living is to announce at irregular intervals that it would take an awful lot of knicker-elastic to tether a full-sized elephant, that if you cut a man's head off with a single blow he will be in no position to remonstrate, and that (as those Flemingway characters used to say) if your aunt had *côjones* she would be your uncle.

The members of the European Community Court of Auditors, after a season of auditing which must have left them exhausted, have just given to the world the news that food sent from the European Community to relieve the plight of the poorest people of Bangladesh, who are close to starvation, has been stolen on arrival and sold for gain.

Well, I never! Well, the European Community Court of Auditors never! What is more, this surely unique bit of auditing is not content to state the tragic fact and leave it at that: the auditors have gone so far as to reveal the astounding news that the stealing was done by the Bangladeshi government, the selling by the same authority, and the buying (at, of course, subsidised prices) by those Bangladeshi public employees – soldiers, civil servants and their kind – most likely to respect sympathetically a call for help the next time a band of insurgents are minded to hang the members of the government in the main square of Dhaka

and are getting close to their goal.

Mind you, the recipients of the EC's bounty must have been either slow off the mark or shockingly ungrateful, because the government, or at least President Ershad, is at this moment in jail contemplating precisely such a fate, and for all I know he may even be restricted to a diet no more lavish than that enjoyed by the two-thirds of his population who were never in a position to get their hands on so much as a packet of European Community corn-flakes, not even for ready money.

But this tale by no means exhausts the originality and perspicuity of the European Community Court of Auditors; they also examined the system by which farmers in the EC are paid large sums not to grow things. The level of incompetence and corruption in the EC can be gauged by the fact that I have repeatedly written to the appropriate office – I forget whether in Belgium, Holland or Luxembourg – to offer my services in this project, and have never once heard so much as an acknowledgement, despite my unqualified assurance that I am willing, at the going rate, or even at a discount, to grow absolutely nothing at all. The auditors, it seems, thought little of my permanent fallow system, and who should blame them, but it was in the conclusion of their report that they showed their magnificent mettle: they had discovered, and fearlessly disclosed, that when farmers were offered monetary inducements to leave fields untitled, "the land with the lowest productivity has been set aside".

I do not know how much the European Community Court of Auditors costs us all in taxes; but even if those two revelations are all they have to show for years of work, they have earned every penny of their salaries, their overseas travel holidays and above all their satisfaction. They have, after all, demonstrated beyond argument that a shrewd thief, should he see something



worth stealing without risk, will usually steal it, and that if you offer a shrewd businessman one of two sums of money as a gift, he will usually choose the larger.

You do not have to be a cynic – I am not one, though you would hardly guess it from what I have just been saying – to feel a great weariness at those conclusions; you have only to be educated to a level at which you have heard of Gresham's Law. Nothing of monetary value can be had free, and if you do not believe me, explain why the National Health Service is in the condition it is. No, dear, it is not because wicked Tory govern-

ments have "starved it of cash", for wicked Tory governments have already stuffed it with a sum of money ending in at least as many noughts as there are wheels in one of those Australian freight-trains a mile long, and I bet you the salary of a member of the European Community Court of Auditors that before the next general election the present government will have stuffed it with a sum of money that it would take, in fivers, to stretch to the moon, with a promise that if re-elected it will stuff it with a sum of money equal to the moon-fivers multiplied by the Australian wheels.

The community charge has been – how shall I put it? – not tremendously popular (except with me, that is, for I was paying four times the charge in rates), nor has it been an instantaneous and obvious vote-winner. But I insist that the idea behind it was not only right but necessary. It asserted that goods which cost money have to be paid for, and (though of course no politician actually dared to say so) that goods which, having been paid for, are then given away, are invariably wasted. The principle grounded in the truth that if everybody has to pay for the services provided by the town hall, everybody will demand value for money. It went awry for two reasons: the charge was never properly tied to the local council, but seen as a Whitehall impost, and those who, never having had to pay to keep the roof over their heads, suddenly found themselves obliged to do so, swamped the argument in squeals of indignation, some of it actually genuine.

What do you suppose would happen if users of the NHS were obliged to pay for it? Oh, I know there are prescription charges and such, but I mean pay for it properly, pay for it, that is, with sums, however finely graded to fit incomes, that would make the NHS user-wince. (Wince, I say, not collapse weeping, let alone suffer cardiac arrest.) That was a real question, and it has an answer. The NHS, in those circumstances, would be run very much better, and patients would benefit at every level. But you all know that it will never happen, and you all know why it will never happen. Or rather: some do not know why it will never happen, and they are the people who are capable of surprise when the European Community Court of Auditors announces that rain falls downwards and the sun is hot.

Meanwhile, the stomachs of the poorer Bangladeshis are just as empty, for the change of leadership will mean only that a different lot will steal the food. But although they are hungry, they should not despair; they can always eat the crops that the EC pays farmers not to grow, or, if real famine looms, the reports of the European Community Court of Auditors.

## Sustaining the home front

While Brigadier Patrick Cordingley, commander of the 7th Armoured Brigade, has been poring over his war maps in the Saudi desert, his wife Melissa has been performing another important task back in Germany – spending every spare moment rallying the worried families of the men under Cordingley's command.

"She is an extremely down-to-earth person with no airs or graces," says one source with the remnants of the British Army on the Rhine. "She has become a model for many of the wives, and has done much to ease the pain of separation."

This week Mrs Cordingley is in Britain on family business, but she is also overseeing arrangements for the first batch of soldiers' wives to enjoy a free ten-day holiday in Egypt sponsored by Wena Hotels only days after the UN deadline for Saddam to leave Kuwait.

Brigadier Cordingley asked the hotel chain to include wives in its offer of free accommodation for his troops after reading about the invitation in *The Times* in September. At the time he hoped that his men could join their wives for rest and recreation in Wena's two four-star hotels in Egypt, but as the January 15 deadline approaches, the MoD has ruled out any leave outside Saudi Arabia.

The first 20 Desert Rat wives will fly from Frankfurt to Cairo on January 21. The hotel owner, Nael Faraghy, who on Cordingley's intervention has now extended his free accommodation offer to all service families until January

1992, says that even if hostilities break out, the holiday will definitely go ahead. "If there is war they will be quite safe and at least an hour's flying time from the nearest fighting. But it will give them some comfort that they are that much nearer their husbands."

## Plastered afterwards

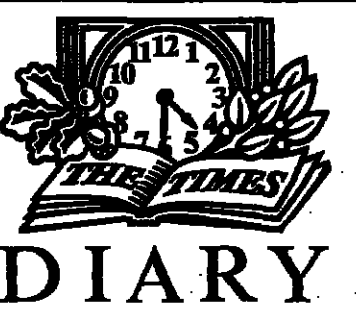
The excitement of becoming political secretary to John Major has proved too much for Judith Chaplin. Within days of taking up the appointment she fell down the stairs at 10 Downing Street, injuring her ankle. She was taken to Westminster Hospital, where her leg was put in plaster.

Denying rumours that a former occupant might have greased the stairs, Chaplin says: "I'm always rushing around and just missed my footing. There have been many jokes at my expense, but it happened in the morning... well before lunch."

Chaplin, who is to contest the safe Tory seat of Newbury at the



next election, has taken the accident, so to speak, in her stride, not missing one day at her desk. The hardest part, she says, is fighting off the attentions of Cabinet ministers who want to sign her plaster cast. "I'm not letting anyone," she says adamantly. "Not even the prime minister? 'Not even him.'"



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## Under the hammer

Among the most avid viewers of last night's first episode of BBC2's lavish new costume drama, *Parnell*, was John Hume, leader of Northern Ireland's Social and Democratic Labour Party and a long-time Parnell admirer. Indeed, he has just won a long battle with the Westminster authorities to have a bronze bust of Parnell erected in the Commons.

"No-one influenced parliamentary politics in the 19th century more than Parnell," says Hume. "I was amazed to discover that no memorial existed to him. The speaker told me that no taxpayers' money was available, so I got a group of Irish businessmen to pay for the bust, and commissioned the Breton sculptor Yann Goulet."

minster corridor where the old Irish Parliamentary party used to meet. There it will surely avoid the fate of the 19th-century marble effigy of Parnell which had pride of place in the hall of the palace of the Most Rev Thomas Croke, Archbishop of Cashel, at the time of Parnell's disgrace.

On hearing of Parnell's involvement with Mrs Kitty O'Shea, Croke ordered a nun to take the bust into the garden and destroy it with a hammer. Hugh Leonard, who wrote the BBC screenplay, says he included the scene in his original script, but it was cut. "The BBC thought that a crazy nun going berserk with a hammer was a bit too much like Ken Russell."

According to the sociologist Lord Runciman, the House of Lords is more of an anachronism than the Church of England, the Household Cavalry and the Durham Miners' Gala. Writing in today's issue of *The London Review of Books*, Runciman reveals the pet name for the Upper Chamber used by Gabriele, wife of fellow peer Noel Annan. "She calls it 'Noel's play group,'" writes Runciman.

## Time on their hands

A time and motion study of the cost effectiveness of the General Synod of the Church of England will be called for when the synod meets at the end of this month. The Bishop of Derby will move that it should meet for no more than seven days in each calendar year, and Bryan Saunders, on behalf of the York diocese, will also move that sessions be shortened. Five motions have been submitted criticising the increasing cost of funding the lengthy Synod sessions. The

response of the Church House organisers? To extend the next session by half a day to allow the motions to be debated.

## Envoi, but not envoy

Charles Powell, one of the few remaining members of cast still employed in Downing Street, has turned down an invitation to become ambassador to South Africa when Sir Robin Renwick takes over in Washington. A source close to Powell, now with John Major in the Gulf, says: "It was not a difficult decision. He was never really interested and the Foreign Office did not try to change his mind."

Powell, who accompanied Mrs Thatcher on all her foreign trips after 1984, is likely to leave Downing Street within the next two months, according to friends. "They say he is likely to seek a post in the City or in industry, having ruled out their that he cash in on his high-level contacts and set up his own advisory consultancy. He lacks the 'entrepreneurial flair' for such a venture, he told them. Surely he never admitted that to Mrs Thatcher.

While Powell looks outside the world of politics for his future career, John Whittingdale, Mrs Thatcher's former pollster, is hoping to follow his boss into Parliament. Whittingdale, who is now helping her to set up the Thatcher Foundation, has applied for the vacancy at Hertsmere, one of the safest Tory seats in the country. The retiring MP Cecil Parkinson, once Mrs Thatcher's cabinet favourite, who announced his resignation immediately after hers.









Mrs Richard Carew Pole was in attendance.

**KENSINGTON PALACE**  
January 9: The Prince of Wales held a meeting with representatives of The Prince's Trust, The Prince's Youth Business Trust and Business in the Community.

[illegible]

**Witham Hall, Lincolnshire**  
Lent term begins today and ends on Wednesday, March 20. Entrance scholarships will be on Friday, February 22. Confirmation by the Bishop of Grantham will be on Thursday, March 14.

Forty Hill, diocese of London: to retire as from 14 April.  
The Rev Robert Varley, Vicar, St John the Baptist, Little Hulton, diocese of Manchester: resigned in December.  
The Rev Alan Whitworth, Rector, Burnall and Rylstone, diocese of Bradford: to retire as from 30 April.

In 1950 he was appointed by the British government as a member of an international commission in relation to the disrupted insolvency of the Barcelona Traction Light & Power Company, then the largest electricity generating and supply company in Spain, which was subsequently referred to the International Court of Justice at The Hague. In 1955 he was appointed to be a member of the committee of enquiry into horticultural marketing. He retired in 1964. Fred Charles became a freemason in 1929 in the Richard Eve Lodge of which he was an active member.

He leaves a son, Michael, and a daughter, Mrs Shirley Lindsay.

**Resignation and retirements**  
The Rev Simon House, Vicar,  
Bitterne Park, diocese of Win-  
chester: to retire as from 15  
May.  
The Rev David Kingsbury  
Jameson, Vicar, Jesus Church,  
Forty Hill, diocese of London:  
to retire as from 14 April.  
The Rev Robert Varley, Vicar,  
St John the Baptist, Little  
Hulton, diocese of Manchester:  
resigned in December.  
The Rev Alan Whitworth,  
Rector, Burnshall and Rylstone,  
diocese of Bradford: to retire as  
from 30 April.











## MEDICAL BRIEFING Dr Thomas Stuttford



## When to keep your mouth shut

Microbiologists working at Tel Aviv university claim that halitosis affects 80 per cent of the population at some time or another. The trouble can be so distressing that it can lead to social isolation; sufferers may find themselves not only banished to the spare bed but shunned by society. Promotion is lost, divorce is common and so, if the conclusions of the Israelis are to be accepted, it is not altogether surprising that for some people suicide seems the answer. The microbiologists who paint this gloomy picture have also, as it happens, announced that they have found some of the answers: a halimeter, a machine which measures the sulphide levels in the breath more objectively than a spouse's nose, and a new two-phase oil and water mouthwash which, by absorbing sulphide particles, promises to be twice as effective as those at present available.

Dr Mel Rosenberg of Tel Aviv attributes most cases of halitosis to oral micro-organisms producing offensive gases, in particular hydrogen sulphide and methylmercaptans. Although simple dental plaque does not itself cause halitosis, few experts would dispute that decayed teeth and rotten gums do result in pockets of altered blood and pus gathering around tooth sockets, where they cause a most unalluring smell. Even so, most authorities would not agree that poor oral hygiene is a cause of troublesome, persistent halitosis, for dental hygiene can be improved by regular cleaning,

gums treated with massage and local applications coupled, if necessary, with antibiotics (flagyl and one of the new penicillins make a useful combination), so that if the cause of the trouble lies in the mouth, domestic harmony can soon be restored.

As well as being caused by oral and dental disease, halitosis can stem from diseases of the nose and throat, the gastrointestinal tract and the lungs. Although most nose and throat infections are soon cleared with antibiotics, chronic changes in the lining of the nasal spaces from long-standing atrophic rhinitis may give rise to a resistant problem.

Chronic lung diseases, particularly bronchiectasis, which is unsuitable for surgery, often cause a foul breath which needs long-term antibiotic treatment and physiotherapy.

Bad breath caused by indigestion is perhaps the most common and difficult to treat. A change of diet to a less rich menu and reduction in the alcohol intake may help, as do the standard indigestion remedies, but even so, it may be a recurrent problem.

With Japanese research workers busily solving the problems of sweaty feet, and the Israelis at work on bad breath, it would be encouraging to think that barrack rooms and offices will soon be as congenial as their PR companies like to imply, but the causes of halitosis are multitudinous, and careful diagnosis as well as a mouthwash will be needed.

## The cleaner cut?

To add to the discord already sown by Salman Rushdie's book, there is now trouble in some Muslim areas over circumcision. The health authorities in Rotherham are alarmed at the number of boys who, as the procedure is not provided routinely by the NHS, are suffering at the hands of unqualified practitioners, often barbers.

The irony is that the Muslims may well be right, and survey medical teaching wrong. The accepted view is that circumcision is only indicated in infants when there is a chronic infection of the foreskin, or if it obstructs the free flow of urine. Paediatricians who determine policy on circumcision regularly see the complications which can occur from the procedure: haemorrhage, infection or, if the operation is carelessly performed, mutilation; in consequence they may be excused for condemning the practice.

However, paediatricians rarely venture into the adult world of genital-urinary (VD) clinics, where the long-term disadvantages of the foreskins which have been so carefully nurtured can be seen.

All sexually transmitted diseases are caught less readily by the circumcised, and the advent of AIDS has now made this an important public health consideration. There are other medical advantages to circumcision: cancer of the penis, which in Britain accounts for 0.1 per cent of male cancer deaths, occurs only in those who were not circumcised in infancy. The circumcised also avoid the distressing skin disease BXO, which causes shrivelling of



the end of the penis. Disease is not the only factor; a survey some time ago, taken among prostitutes, multi-partnered women whose opinions are unclouded by emotion, showed that well over 90 per cent found intercourse with the circumcised man more desirable in every way.

## Sober thought for smokers

Many people smoke only when drinking — men who enjoy a cigar after a good meal, for instance, or people of either sex who find that a cigarette has a calming effect after the turmoil of the day, or enables them to confront the tensions of a social gathering. The *British Medical Journal* reports that research by the Royal Hospital in Adelaide shows that smoking when eating, or soon after eating, appreciably slows the passage of food through the stomach and in consequence delays the absorption of alcohol. Those who smoke when eating and drinking will get drunk less quickly, but will sober up more slowly, phenomena which may affect a person's ability to drive.

## Pregnant with possibility

What role does the contraceptive pill really play in determining a woman's fertility?  
Liz Gill reports

The contraceptive pill, a subject of often bitter controversy for more than a generation, this week reinforced its claim to be a blessing in the lives of women. And it did so in the least likely field, that of infertility.

Doctors at the in vitro fertilisation (IVF) clinic at the Cromwell hospital, west London, discovered that ten of the 17 women to whom they had given a two-month course of the pill before fertility drug treatment subsequently became pregnant. The rate among a comparable group who had not had the pill was two out of 13.

If these findings are substantiated, what began as a practical measure to manipulate menstrual cycles could double the success rate of test tube fertilisation — now about 20 per cent — and have far-reaching implications for users of the pill.

Eric Simons, the consultant gynaecologist and obstetrician in charge of the programme at the Cromwell hospital, stresses, however, that these are early days. "The difference between the two groups was startling but we are at the stage of clinical observation. Future studies might blow the findings apart, although my instincts say not."

Mr Simons and his colleagues believe the explanation might be that some women produce too much of the hormone responsible for ovulation, resulting in the production of eggs too weak to be fertilised, or embryos that fail to establish themselves. "By suppressing the background hormones, the woman seems to produce higher quality eggs, and in larger numbers, which means a better chance of a pregnancy."

He believes that an immediate repercussion must be a reconsideration of the traditional advice to women coming off the pill to wait three months before conceiving.

"One of the reasons this was suggested was that doctors needed to know the date of the last 'real' period so that they could calculate the stages of pregnancy," he says. "This is not so necessary with modern scans."

"There were other, more specious, reasons: that your body needed a rest, that it had, somehow, been undermined by the pill — but that is just not sensible. There was also a suggestion that, if you did fall pregnant in that time, the baby might be damaged."

"I can recall only one study that said such babies were smaller than average and I think the suggestion has almost become a myth. Yet women still feel terribly guilty if it happens."

"We have to look at this again. It would be unfortunate if women wasted their eggs by being told to wait. It may be that, if you wait for six months to conceive after stopping the pill, you will not fall pregnant."

Infertility is estimated to affect one in ten couples in Britain. When the problem lies with the woman, her previous use of oral contraceptives has often been blamed. But such accusations are frequently prompted more by moral fervour than by medical science. Mr Simons says the accusations are unfounded. "The pill is not a panacea, and it is not suitable for everyone, but some of the bad things that have been said about it, that it is to blame for infertility, for example, have not been sustained."

Dr Barbara Hollingworth, the senior clinical medical officer at the Margaret Pyke Centre in central London, which has 19,000 family planning patients, agrees. "For too long people have thought the pill damaged fertility and this is a myth we would like to scotch." She says long-term studies show that, for younger women, oral contraceptives make no difference to the rate at which fertility returns. For women aged over 35, the return can sometimes take years. "Fertility declines naturally, anyway, and you can postpone having a baby too long," she says.

The pill is still the most popular method of contraception in Britain. Dr Hollingworth believes that, far from



Dispensing help: the stores of the Margaret Pyke Centre, in London... the pill is the most popular method of contraception in Britain

jeopardising their chances of motherhood, the three million users might be increasing them by protecting themselves against fibroids, endometriosis and ectopic pregnancies. "The thickened mucus in the cervix that the pill causes also reduces the chances of infections getting in. Most pelvic infections are sexually transmitted," she says.

The Margaret Pyke Centre, which carries out research and development into family planning as well as seeing patients, views the findings at the Cromwell with great interest. "We have to see what more scientific research shows but we would not dismiss it out of hand at this stage," Dr Hollingworth says.

Dr Dorothy Tacchi, of the National Association of Family Planning Doctors, is also keeping an open mind. "I will be very interested to see what the outcome is," she says. "All too often, these things turn out to be not quite so marvelous as first thought." She believes, however, that on the whole the advantages of using the pill outweigh the disadvantages.

The Family Planning Association also regards the Cromwell experience with interest. But its spokesman, Ruth Grigg, says: "It seems to be a bit of a one-off at the moment. The numbers of women involved are too small for us to draw any significant conclusions."

She warns that the pill may also mask problems. "Women who take it for a while may forget that originally their cycles were somewhat erratic. There is also a psychological element. In this country women are so used to controlling conception that they think, once they try to conceive, it will happen instantly. For the vast majority that does not occur. Making love two or three times a week will result in a pregnancy for 60 per cent of women after six months and 80 per cent after a year."

Some experts, though content with the pill as a contraceptive, are sceptical about claims that it can be an aid to the childless. John Studd, a consultant gynaecologist at King's College hospital, London, dismisses the suggestion as "ridiculous".

"There is no evidence at all that because you stop ovulation for three months there is then some sort of breakthrough. We are talking about an impression. I came back from holiday to find ten pregnancies in our IVF unit. You might as well say Christmas pudding had been a cause."

For too long people have thought the pill damaged fertility and this is a myth we would like to scotch

## Attitude not to be sneezed at

Are introverts and depressives more likely to catch a cold?

ARE aggressive or introverted people more likely to catch a cold than good-natured, gregarious types? Ever since Louis Pasteur pronounced at the end of his life that the microbe was nothing, and the terrain was all, scientists have been trying to show that viruses are more likely to invade when we are stressed or depressed.

Now it seems there is strong evidence for this view. The latest study, by Dr Phil Evans, a psychologist at the Polytechnic of Central London, shows, he says, a clear association between a hostile mood and catching a cold.

According to Dr Evans's findings, people who are angry, self-centred and sceptical are far more likely to get severe, lingering colds than positive, cheerful and relaxed individuals. Dr Evans says: "We have now shown that a hostile attitude is a key factor in going down with a cold. It seems that fluctuations in

feelings may influence our immune status, and general vulnerability to infection."

Dr David Tyrrell, the director of the Common Cold Unit, which closed its famous Salisbury research station last year, says: "Ever since the Seventies we had the feeling that undue stress of all kinds was a significant factor in catching a cold. It also seemed extremely likely that certain personality types were more likely to succumb to colds. But it was difficult to get hard evidence, and it is only recently that we have been able to believe our own results."

"It all began to make sense when we linked up with Dr Sheldon Cohen, of the University of Pittsburgh, who has been analysing our data. Information gathered from our almost 20,000 volunteers [since 1945] is now showing

that introverts are more likely than extroverts to get colds, and that stress is an overriding factor."

Separation, divorce, or moving house, for instance, are often followed by an infection, although the Common Cold Unit found that even a "good" circumstance, such as falling in love or landing a new job, can provide a fertile environment for cold viruses.

THERE is also evidence to suggest that people who are confident and secure in their work suffer less stress and fewer colds than people who are frustrated and resentful, or at the bottom of the ladder. "Top people seem able to put off their colds until the weekend, or when they go on holiday," Dr Tyrrell says. "Many years ago, C.

Northcote Parkinson, the author of Parkinson's law, said that one of the most important questions when interviewing people for important posts should be to ask which day of the week they got their colds. If they said Saturday or Sunday, then they could be considered for the job. At the time, nobody analysed this possibility, but it now seems to be true."

Dr George Lewith, who runs a centre for the study of complementary medicine in Southampton, says that the attitude of doctors towards patients with colds is also significant. "A recent study showed that there is a strong link between minor respiratory symptoms and how people are treated in the surgery," he says. "If the consultation is positive and sympathetic, cold symptoms

clear up much more quickly than if the doctor is indifferent or dismissive."

Men, it has been suggested, get far worse colds, or feel they have far worse colds, than women because the virus is more of a shock to their systems. According to this theory, women's hormonal cycles mean their bodies are always in a state of flux, and so can accommodate the virus without too much trouble. But Dr Lewith says there is no evidence of any kind to suggest that gender is a factor in susceptibility to colds.

The old cliché says that we might be able to send men to the moon, but we cannot cure the common cold. Nevertheless, it seems we at least have one method of prevention — cultivate a happy, extrovert personality, and do not harbour negative thoughts.

LIZ HODGKINSON  
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# Hellish paths of Hispanic glory

Michael Wright on the story of the Liberator drowning in the damp damnation of his destiny in Latin America

The poor General's case is closed... that was the fundamental belief of all who saw him on his final journey, and perhaps that was why no one left a written record. Indeed, in the opinion of some of his companions, the general would have no place in history.

Well they were wrong, weren't they? Simón Bolívar is now widely regarded as the greatest genius the Hispanic-American world has produced. While Napoleon was wowing Europe with his smart hats and smarter campaigns, Bolívar was mugging up on his Rousseau and growing into the great general who, by the end of his short life, had wrested from Spanish domination an empire five times more vast than all of Europe, had led 20 years of wars to keep it free and united, and had governed it with a firm hand. They named a cognac after Napoleon. They named a country after Bolívar.

Curiously, however, many Europeans know almost nothing about the great Liberator. When old magic Márquez now brings him to the attention of the *vulgar* literati, it is not through a sunshine portrait of heroism and honour, but a gloomy-doomy etching of disillusion and disease. Instead of reveling in the sparks and flashes and stars, Márquez gives us the sodden, burnt out firework which is all that is left of General Simón José, Antonio de la Santísima Trinidad Bolívar y Palacios, in the last year of his life, as he makes that final, "endless journey to nowhere" that no one bothered to record. What we witness so acutely is not so much a tragic tumble from glory via hubris to despair, as a pathetic crumble from despair via illness into hell. Oh, the glories are there all right, glimmering ghost-like through the clouds of the general's

memory. But the hell is palpable in this time of glory.

From the start, Bolívar's body burns "in a bonfire of fever, farting stony, foul-smelling gas" and his decay is symbolically — dare I say, "synthetically" — reflected in the landscape: "The great mangrove branches seemed to boil in the heat of the dead swamps surrounding the city, whose pestilential stink was less bearable than that of the bay, corrupted for over a century by the blood and offal from the slaughterhouse. It was impossible to reconcile glory with the stench from the sewers."

The general and all Latin America are seen as rotting and plague-

## THE GENERAL IN HIS LABYRINTH

By Gabriel García Márquez  
Translated by Edith Grossman  
Cape, £13.99

ridden. As he voyages grimly down Márquez's beloved river Magdalena (which comes complete with the same open-mouthed alligators waiting for butterfly snacks whom we met in *Love in the Time of Cholera*), the decomposing carcasses of drowned animals float past him, while his gonorrhea-gripped Army of the Republic is publicly shunned as "the emissary of the plague". This physical decay mirrors, in turn, the social disillusion of the league-of-nations for whose unity the general had campaigned so long.

"The nation was falling apart from one ocean to the other; the spectre of civil war reared over its ruins."

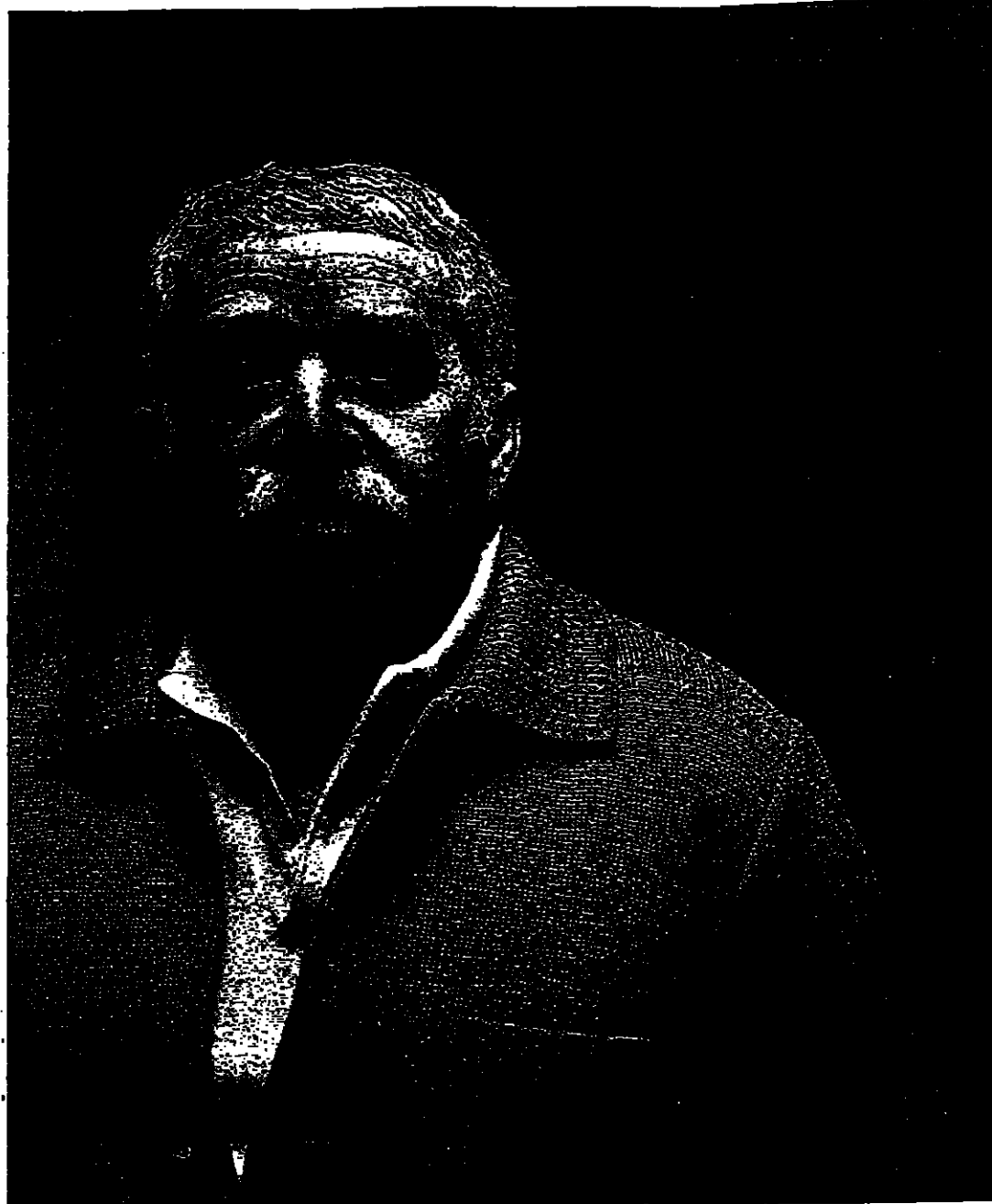
On top of all the deeply symbolic pestilence, there is as much rain in this short book as there is fog in *Blind House*. That's a lot of rain. With characteristic bombast,

Bolívar declares that "It has been raining since 3 in the morning of the 17th century". The rain is "eternal", the drizzle "millennarian", and the narrative positively drips with "seismic downpours" that uproot houses, while all the time the protagonist is slowly drowning in the drain of his destiny.

Márquez's fusion of the personal and the public is predictably skilful, and lends depths and colours to his history. It will already be clear, however, that this is a very different kind of work from its distinguished predecessors. The narrative is sandpaper dry (despite all that infernal rain), and reveals a tough, chiselled fluency that smacks heartily of Joseph Conrad.

Such fluency should not blind us to the immense love and care that have clearly gone into weaving this Bayeux Tapestry of a book. Márquez deftly flits from one exploit or expectation to the next, using an unexpected visitor or an old clock or a nostalgic waltz as a mounting block into the high saddle of the past. He has clearly done some sterling homework, but whilst acknowledging the "exoticism" of the novel, the author does not renounce what he calls "the extravagant prerogatives of the novel", which include a bear trained to thread needles, and nine cages of parrots and macaws that railed against Santander in three languages. These are very Márquez, but not typical of this particular novel.

So don't be fooled, or disappointed; what we have here is not an extravagant, nor a "magical" work. Márquez has sublimated his enormous imaginative power, and his restraint, like his fluency, is immaculate. The result is a very artistic work of damned history, if not quite a damned historic work of art.



García Márquez, grand old man of magical realism, with the birth of a continent not magical but maddening

## A la recherche de la bimbo perdue

John Nicholson

VENUS BLUE  
By Gustaf Sobin  
Bloomsbury, £13.99

A WAY THROUGH THE WOODS  
By Katharine McMahon  
Sinclair-Stevenson, £13.95

A HOUSE IN THE HAMPTONS  
By Gloria Nagy  
André Deutsch, £14.99

film noir belong to the universal tradition of the cinema.

The book's text switches between Millicent's wishful thinking and Stefan's nostalgia. Stefan works his way inside Millicent's head, just as she had earlier penetrated several layers of Molly's amnesiac shield. Millicent tracks her prey back to an earlier manifestation in Europe, as the filling in an exotic human sandwich. Molly's pen-

chant for threesomes re-emerges in California, to delight and enrage Millicent and, later, Stefan. It's all very clever. But I don't think Mr Sobin will find it an easy trick to repeat. My guess is he'll go back to poetry for a while.

There's a strongly elegiac feeling to Katharine McMahon's first novel, *A Way Through the Woods*, and a similar fascination with early 20th-century mythology. Here it's the English bourgeoisie under the microscope. Sophia Theobald, engaged to an aristocratic young lawyer, is persuaded to revisit Needlewick, the scene of a momentous childhood trip to stay with her cousin Helen Callwood. Only 15 years separate the two visits, but five of them were filled by the Great War. Much has changed, and Sophia is forced to review many of her earlier impressions — not least of herself. This is a romantic novel — surely a contender for the Betty Trask award? — but none the worse for it. The characterisation

is careful, the writing crisp, and Miss McMahon has an engaging way of indicating period without dragging in redundant props.

Such subtlety is conspicuous by its absence in Gloria Nagy's rumbustious new blockbuster. Its title, *A House in the Hamptons*, gives the game away. This is a book about lifestyle: the Hamptons are a collection of villages at the east end of Long Island, where prosperous New Yorkers spend their summer vacation in holiday homes ranging from beach cabin to mansion. Once a bastion of the sedately moneyed, the Hamptons have been yuppified and become, in estate agent's terms, the East Coast's answer to Malibu.

What better language to describe an area in which realtors jostle with speciality car salesmen and doubtful bond dealers for places on the social committees and in the weekly softball game, which means that you've really made it in the Hamptons? Against this unpromising backdrop, Miss Nagy has constructed a neat, even quite moving story, of a group of friends who are ripped apart by a catalogue of late 20th-century ailments — social and medical. Some formula writing here, but warmth and humour, too. Certainly a banker for the holiday suitcase, though not to buy in hardback.

## Ye Quainte Olde English murder

PAPERBACKS

Lisanne Radice

THE OLD SILENT  
By Martha Grimes  
Headline, £4.50

CRIME fiction addicts expect their authors to produce serious puzzles, genuine motives, and an ending in which good triumphs over evil. Two of the offerings this week will satisfy them. They may well be less pleased with the remaining three. Jolly romps may be amusing, but somehow they detract from a proper examination of clues, red herrings, and psychological insights. The little grey cells, the employment of which, as we all now know from the excellent M. Hercule Poirot, is so important, will hardly be used.

Take the work of an American writer whose success in the US has baffled her English counterparts. Martha Grimes, a teacher of English at an American college, comes over to England, so her publishers tell us, every year in order to gather material for her books. Her compatriots love her for her "authentic" descriptions of apparently rural pursuits, her eccentric aristocratic sleuths, her outrageous aunts cloned from

Hyacinth Tramwell and her sister Primrose of the Flowers Detection Agency. The two ladies descend upon the delightful village of Chilton Fells, to investigate the strangely high incidence of sudden death among the married men of the area. They discover a deadly organisation, a highly selective club of women (with president, officials, and charter), whose function is to aid ladies who prefer widowhood to divorce by killing their husbands. As Primrose points out, it is so much more comfortable to be a grieving widow than a divorcee with a reduced standard of living. Readers have to make up their own minds if good triumphs wholly over evil.

● Lawrence Block's hero, Bernie Rhodenbarr, in *The Burglar in the Closet* (No Exit Press, £3.50) finds himself locked into a wardrobe, as he is about to steal his dentist's ex-wife's fabulous jewellery. To his chagrin, once he has picked the lock and escaped, he finds that the haul, which he had neatly placed in a position of prominence, has disappeared, and that the ex-wife lies murdered in the bedroom. Hastily fighting off the suspicions of the police, and only one step ahead of imprisonment, our hero dashes round New York pursuing clues, angry orthodontists, nubile dental hygienists, and other assorted and, of course, eccentric characters. Definitely amusing if you like that sort of thing.

● And finally to two books recognisably in the more obvious crime fiction genre. Arthur Upfield's *Death of a Swagman* (Eden, £3.50) set in the Australian outback; his hero is the famous half-caste, Detective Inspector Napoleon Bonaparte. First published in 1945, this tale of murder in an isolated community is beautifully crafted, with characters meticulously observed, and a plot that is a pleasure to unravel. His descriptions remain in the mind. "The trousers were slightly short for the wearer, and the rear hem of each leg rested with persistent confidence on the top of the rear tag of each elastic-sided boot."

● A Prey to Murder, by Ann Cleeve (Arrow, £3.50) sees the return of her amateur detective, George Palmer-Jones. The story deals with murder and theft, the former of the powerful owner of the hotel where George and his wife are staying, the latter of the eggs of several birds, listed as endangered species. The author, apart from disentangling clues in a most workmanlike and praiseworthy fashion, also provides the reader with a fascinating and unusual insight into the world of hawks, peregrines, and falcons.



"Authentic" crimes of Grimes

Noël Coward, and her language, which purports to convey the bucolic nastiness of the rustic peasant. Out there in mid-America they can't have enough of it; here, the critic, however well disposed, clenches teeth, and with growing disbelief hurries on through the turgid and often incomprehensible prose.

The Old Silent, a title that must be assumed redolent of deepest rural Yorkshire, provides the reader with castles and turrets, wayward staff, precocious eight-year-olds, a beautiful killer, Aunt Agatha, the greedy gobbler of goblet cakes, and Superintendent Richard Jury, mentor of Melrose Plant, an upper-crust sleuth.

Jury witnesses the killing of music critic and columnist Roger Healey by his wife Nell, and, fascinated by her enchanting remoteness, decides to delve into her past. In so doing he uncovers a trail of murders, a kidnapping, an illegitimate child, and other skulduggery among the English upper classes and their tenantry. The denouement, at which the reader has to suspend judgment, takes place in the Hamptons Odeon at a rock band concert. Ancient and modern England are thus brought together.

● Our second romp, *The Widows Club*, by Dorothy Cannell (Bantam, £3.50), is also filled with eccentric characters, in particular

## Big biz of old betrayal

FICTION

Chris Petit

THE SECRET PILGRIM  
By John Le Carré  
Hodder & Stoughton, £14.95

If memory serves, it was that fine actor, the late Arthur Lowe (Captain Mainwaring of *Dad's Army*), who was first considered by the BBC for the role of George Smiley — for whom he was a dead ringer — before being cast aside in favour of the graver Sir Alec Guinness. It was feared that Lowe's comic demeanour would sabotage the lugubrious spy versus spy world of Le Carré. And Le Carré is in the business of being in deadly earnest, of elevating a popular fiction form from low to middle-brow, of doing for the genre what Lennon and McCartney did for Tin Pan Alley.

*The Secret Pilgrim* is Le Carré's "Yesterday". Only awaiting an arrangement of cascading strings, it further sanctifies the Smiley/St Alec combo — 97 per cent archaean, three per cent Cheshire Cat — so much so that the Smiley original ends up quite submerged by that earlier acting job of Sir Alec's — Chesterton's portly innocent, Father Brown. The past always hangs heavy in Le Carré, never more than now, with the cold war over, Smiley in retirement, and his protégé and narrator, the donkey-like Ned, in the twilight of his career. This, in turn, prompts the question: how much has the spy thriller, as practised by Le Carré, progressed at all? The inspiration remains those musty old betrayals of several decades ago perpetrated by Philby et al. Our writers, Le Carré in particular, have much to thank Kim for. Without him, post-Fleming English spy fiction would have had as much impact as the Swiss school.

*The Secret Pilgrim* brings Smiley out of retreat to address, at Ned's bidding, an adoring audience of young spies and spyttes, and to replay his role of Housemaster of Life. What follows is essentially a review of Ned's career, prompted by Smiley's after-dinner homilies. Together they form a series of loosely woven stories that provide a classical anthology of sorts: a Chestertonian episode, in which Father Smiley protects the illusions of two threadbare parents as to the criminal nature of their dead son; an excursion into Conrad's heart of darkness. The only addition to a familiar gallery is of a Thatcherite yob, who delivers to Ned the sharpest shock of all — that there are no rules left.

Obfuscation is, of course, the name of the game in Le Carré, and the game itself? None other than the great one of life, delivered from the authorial pulpit in see-sawing prose: "We had everything we needed," says Ned of the golden age, "a righteous cause, an evil enemy, an indulgent ally, a seething world, women to cheer us on, but only from the touch-line." Ah, women, those perfect cameos: unobtainable ideals of romantic love and free spirits, with exotic names like Stephanie and Bella, who stand in contrast to the prosaic Mabels and Monicas serving as golfing wives and routine mistresses. Either way, these women are there to be practised upon — the deceiving of them a rehearsal for the greater dissembling done pro patria. Indeed, interest in Le Carré stems mainly from the nuances of infidelity and betrayal, and the fear of exposure that lies at the heart of both. Such hollow romanticism is vulnerable to the snicker from the back row.

Nor does Le Carré ever quite shake off a sneaking admiration for a system that can produce such a class of professional dissemblers. Though this dreary cliché of British perfidy has long since declined into bull-necked incompetence, it no doubt has a few more outings from writers who know on which side their bread lies buttered. It also disguises the reason for Le Carré's lasting success, which is more basic, atavistic even, and is to be found in those temporary refuges and safe houses that dot his sprawling narratives like island havens. The nightmarish alternative to these pockets of safety is, of course, the interrogation room, the twist being that safe houses can turn out to be just the opposite, and the interrogation room an unexpected haven.

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# Jolly jinks round Genesis

## THEATRE

### Children of Eden Prince Edward

YEARS ago, Stephen Schwartz's *Godspell* struck the cognoscenti as impish and cute, transforming (as it did) Jesus into a hip clown and the crucifixion into a rest period between songs. But it is still much revived, especially by teachers wanting an upbeat end-of-term show. The same fate probably awaits Schwartz and John Caird's *Old Testament* counterpart, which is energetic and good-humoured, but also sentimental and silly. The second half, which involves the Flood, might almost be called *Godspill*.

John Napier sets the show under a huge dome, full of ladders and walkways, and topped by what might be fragments of gilded angels, bits of cupids, and other shattered mouldings. Amid this blend of cathedral, derelict theatre and building site, surrounded by figures in grey-blue dungarees, stands Ken Page's God, a genial clown in a hand-me-down version of Joseph's technicolour dreamcoat. Conveniently cutting the six days of creation to under six seconds, he sprouts up Shezwee Powell's feisty Eve and Martin Smith's Adam, a pristine David Attenborough, who bustles about earnestly observing the humanoid anteaters, zebras and monkeys wandering the stage.

Here Schwartz and Caird's revisionism begins. There is no

truck with nudity. Our ancestors remain in ragged body-stocks even after they have raided the palm with seaweed-like leaves that God calls the Tree of Knowledge. Moreover, Eve takes a bite because of a character trait important to the authors - an eagerness to explore and discover; Adam joins her, not because he is weak but because he is too devoted a husband to lose her when she asserts her independence.

Still softer stuff follows. Adam creates the first nuclear family, though in a papier mâché cave, not a 1930s semi. But now it is Adrian Beaumont's Cain who develops curiosity and wanderlust, only to run into trouble with dad. Father punches son, whereupon son raises a stone and erroneously befriends brother Abel, whom he adores. Thus does the first murder dwindle into the first accidental death: which makes it hard to understand why poor Cain spends the rest of the show being rebuffed as the pioneer of evil.

By now the pattern is clear. Indeed, it re-emerges with Kevin Colson's Noah, a grim parody of King Lear who gives his estates to the compliant Ham and Shem and sends the independent Japheth packing. Starting with God, fathers create, sons misbehave for their own good, only to be resisted by offspring who unconsciously crave the good of the species. "They start leaving you the day they were born," solemnly sings Colson, now reconciled with his unruly lad. "The hardest part of love is letting go."

A banal conclusion, to be frank,



Rapid creator: Ken Page as God the Father in *Children of Eden*

and expressed with the heavy-handedness that often afflicts Schwartz the lyricist. "Oh my child whom I love so well, what will you do to me?" he asks, while the boy, who is to be rebuffed by his father, looks on. "Oh, only to resist the spell of one seductive tree!" Schwartz the composer, however, is a more inventive fellow: when he says a solo but capable of sweep and power when he comes to a chorus, and resourceful enough to switch from hymn to hot gospel to Mardi-Gras

revelry for the flood's victims.

That number is staged with brio by Caird; but then so is almost everything else, from the entry of Noah's ark, to the boy's rebellion by giant fish of the drowned. He might have resisted Adam's lovable mutt cooking a leg on the Tree of Knowledge, though. Indeed, he might have resisted the dog altogether. But the habits of *Godspell* are not easily lost.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

## THEATRE

### The Fever Theatre Upstairs, Royal Court

IF NOTHING more, this 100-minute piece (drama? dream? denunciation?) by the actor/playwright Wallace Shawn would still be an amazing feat of memory. At the start of the evening he ambles on, rather shyly, pausing at a convenient light switch to say, "Well, I'm going to begin. So I'll turn these lights off." Off go our lights and three spots focus on the metal chair that is the only object on the stage.

Shawn sits down there, for a time seemingly blinded by the

fierce spotlights glaring down on his head and shining onto the hooded eyes he nearly closes but perhaps not against the light, nor even to concentrate his mind upon the lengthy speech ahead of him. After just a few moments we know that what he is doing is recalling the first scene of a fearful experience, a nightmare vision, etched on his inward eye; one which he must disclose, elaborate and account for until he can bring the memory to some temporary close.

He plunges into the story as the ordeal approaches a climax, revisiting "some country where my language isn't spoken", where a revolution is being crushed, where children are raped in front of their parents, where captured rebels are tortured to death. He is

in his hotel room, feverishly demanding as earlier memories of estrangement coalesce, like the premonitions in *La Nausée*, to a passionate revulsion for the methods the haves employ to keep the have-nots out of sight or, if this cannot be done, firmly under foot. The nightmare in the hotel bathroom is then placed into the context of his own privileged life, in New York City, where among like friends he discusses the nuances of a favourite film and buys fine presents for his children. The issue is the awkward question posed by Simone Weil: "How can you laugh when children are suffering in China?" How can we celebrate the violin and all the other pleasures of art, alert conversation, landscape and food, when in another country, or

perhaps in the building around the corner, guards are crushing a young man's testicles?

Shawn tells his story with gentle, infinitely courteous inflections sometimes gesturing with a hand, on two occasions gripping the seat beneath him as he reaches a crisis of self-discovery. He lances the self-assurance of people of good will, and if somewhere in the third quarter a tone of savage irony is sustained too long, my unease may well be that of someone living his own privileged life in London. Shawn's tough, bleak monologue brings the unpalatable truths of privilege powerfully home to base, unsparingly recognising how quickly the twinges of guilt will pass.

JEREMY KINGSTON

## CONCERT

### LPO/Botstein Barbican

RICHARD WILSON is not yet a name that draws the Barbican reported a 12-per-cent house for the British premiere of the American composer's First Symphony, and not even the promise of Brahms' Symphony No 1 at the end of the evening could lure an audience of much more than 200.

Those who braved the unknown heard 25 minutes of unpretentious and unimportant music, despite the titles of its movements: Preparation, Action, Contemplation and Reaction. Those were, approximately, the functions of the parts as they related to the whole.

Poised all the time between a more abstract, chromatic harmonic language, and a rhythmic directness which simplifies its speech, the symphony will not commit itself to either tonality or atonality, but teases the listener throughout with its indecision. Textually, the result is enticing. A flurry of an ascending scale, fine skins of string-writing pitted in scattered repartee against the brass, trills and tremolos

which dissolve into thin air, and whirling moto perpetuo powered with percussion keep the ear alert. Thematically and structurally the piece is less satisfying. A more daring performance would perhaps throw more into perspective, but on this first hearing the content seemed over lightweight for the form.

Not a note, though, was wasted, and neither was a minute of our time. Wilson is craftsman enough to know when to speak and when to keep silent, which is more than can be said for Joseph Joachim. Brahms thought highly of his Hungarian contemporary and was known to turn to him for advice. On the evidence of his deservedly seldom played Violin Concerto No 3, it is difficult to see why Elmar Oliveira is to be congratulated on his technical prowess and on the commitment which saw him through 45 minutes of verbose Hungarian, asymmetrical cadences, rhythmic snags, stirring melancholy and all. The finale certainly put the London Philharmonic and Leon Botstein through their paces: a few hours in the recording studio, which was the excuse for this concert, should familiarise them with its finer points.

HILARY FINCH

## ROCK

### Robert Plant Town and Country

PARKED indiscreetly adjacent to the Town and Country Club foyer was a blue van marked "Paramedic". What with the record-breaking number of decibels made available to listeners at Led Zeppelin shows in the 1970s, one had legitimate cause to fear that Robert Plant's presence in Kentish Town had called into existence the first-ever St John Ambulance mobile cardiac unit.

One need not have worried. In fact the senses' only reminder of a bygone decade was not aural but olfactory, in the guise of a clutch of joss-sticks mock-reverentially inserted at the base of the stage by a roadie. To those packed in at the front the fragrance would have been appreciated, not least on account of their own exertions.

For his part, Plant showed up dressed for exercise, wearing a black singlet which gave display space to some well-honed biceps. The fact that he never used to be that shape, along with the brand-name spring water he drank, suggested that he has cleaned up his act in the gym, as most rockers

of a certain age are inclined to do. The muscles do not necessarily suit him, sitting uneasily on a frame which, however pumped-up the music, likes to keep time with feminine grace. To compound the ambiguity, at one stage he even seemed to be wobbling his pectorals at us. The voice remains the same though - the melodic, melodramatic squall which the three-piece Led Zeppelin used to use as a fourth piece.

But for the presence of keyboards, Plant's five-album solo career has leaned on the sparse instrumentation developed by Zep. With the assistance of his four fresh-faced sidekicks, Plant dipped into the back catalogue and came out with some driven bluesy rock in the form of "The Immigrant Song", "Living Loving Moan", "Nobodys Fool" and "Ramble On", but the greater emphasis was on the material this unit has collectively recorded on the albums *Now and Zen* and *Manic Nirvana*.

There was no "Big Log", but "Big Love" made a big noise. The bigger noise, though, came from devotees at the end of two encores. As far as one could tell, the mobile cardiac unit was surplus to requirements.

JASPER REES

## NEW RELEASES

**AMERICA** (15): Mel Gibson and Robert Downey Jr. as misadventurous pilots in an offshoot of the Vietnam war. Loud, cruel, and devastating. Director: Roger Spottiswoode. Orion West End (071-630 222/7815).

**AFACHINOPHOBIA** (PG): Dandy spiders emerge through a conical Californian community. Enjoyable but filled with humour and suspense. Director: Frank Marshall. Cannon Video (071-552 9999) Notting Hill (071-727 8709) Odeon Kensington (071-622 6844) Lakeside Cinema (071-630 6111) Screen (071-722 5505).

**DELTA FORCE 2** (15): Chuck Norris and a handful of marines destroy a Colombian drug cartel. Black, mindless action fantasy. Director: Andrew Davis. Cannon Video (071-630 0831).

**THE GARDEN** (15): The Peacock. A comedy by David Hare. A powerful, elegant play of scenes and images around themes of death, religion and love. Director: Peter Kosminsky. Cannon Video (071-630 0831).

**THE NASTY GIRL** (PG): Provocative, funny assault on Germany's Nazi past, with Lena Stokas as the girl uncovering her home town's sordid history. Director: Michael Verhoeven. Cannon Video (071-630 0831) Metro (071-437 0757) Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365).

**SECRET WEDDING**: Part political, part romantic, part off-beat romance between a priest and his former lover. An engaging film from Argentinean director Alejandro Agresti. ICA Cinema (071-630 3647).

**CURRENT**

**ALMOST AN ANGEL** (PG): Crocodile Dundee star Paul Hogan as a professional thief who believes he has returned from the dead to do good deeds. Feeble escalation into supernatural whimsy. Director: Peter Jackson. Cannon Video (071-630 0831) Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE** (15): Jane Campion's excellent film about the New Zealand writer, Jeanette Winterson, originally a TV series. A beautiful cinematic art. Director: Jane Campion. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365).

**BLUE STEEL** (15): Tough, blood-spattered police with a feminist slant from director Kathryn Bigelow. Odeon Kensington (071-622 6844) Mezzanine (071-430 6111).

## CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London (and where indicated with the symbol  $\Delta$ ) on release across the country.

**COME SEE THE PARADISE** (15): Alan Parker's romantic drama about the American treatment of the Japanese after Pearl Harbor. Handily mounted, telling story of the war and the director heads. Director: Alan Parker. Odeon Haymarket (071-538 7687).

**THE COMFORT OF STRANGERS** (15): Rupert Everett and Natasha Richardson. A touching story of a young man and woman who meet and fall in love. Director: Christopher Walken. Labyrinth Video (071-732 3333/3334).

**FANTASIA** (15): Disney's famous musical of popular concert classics. Director: Mark Kirkland. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365).

**FLATLINERS** (15): Kiefer Sutherland, Julia Roberts and Kevin Bacon as medical students probing the boundaries between death and life. Director: Joel Schumacher. Cannon Video (071-630 0831) Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**GHOST** (12): Jack Nicholson's supernatural thriller. Bizarre, incoherent, but absorbing while it lasts. Director: Stanley Kubrick. Cannon Video (071-630 0831) Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**GOODFELLAS** (18): Martin Scorsese's gangster epic following a New York hoodlum's rise and fall. Director: Martin Scorsese. Cannon Video (071-630 0831) Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**HENRY AND JUNE** (18): Annette Bening's passionate affair with Henry Miller in bohemian Paris. Director: Philip Kaufman. Cannon Video (071-630 0831) Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**HOME ALONE** (PG): Family film about a boy who is left alone at Christmas. Director: Chris Columbus. Cannon Video (071-630 0831) Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**BOOKENDS**: Disappointingly empty tale of two literary biobes. Director: Michael Hordson. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**THE COUNTRY WIFE**: Funny, funny, old-fashioned production. Director: Fanny Ardant. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**FIVE GUYS NAMED MOE**: Hilarious parody of the classic western. Director: Louis J. Horvath. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**OUT OF ORDER**: Donald Sinden pulls, Michael Williams perils, in a tale of a man who is left alone at Christmas. Director: Ray Cooney. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**MAN OF THE MOMENT**: A young man who is left alone at Christmas. Director: Ray Cooney. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**PIANO**: A young man who is left alone at Christmas. Director: Ray Cooney. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**PRIVATE LIVES**: A young man who is left alone at Christmas. Director: Ray Cooney. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**RACING DEMON**: A young man who is left alone at Christmas. Director: Ray Cooney. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**THE REHEARSAL**: A young man who is left alone at Christmas. Director: Ray Cooney. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

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Swiss Cottage (071-722 5928) Mezzanine (071-430 6111) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**THE HOT SPOT** (18): Raging assault and capture in a tiny town. Director: Hopper. John Johnson as the driver who unearths a hidden past. Director: Hopper. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**METROPOLITAN** (15): What Salman's comedy of manners set among Victorian Londoners and preposterous New York's debauches and preposterous Victorian Londoners. Director: Salman. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**THE NEVERENDING STORY PART 2** (U): A return visit to the land of Fantasia. Director: Michael Oast. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**THE SHELTERING SKY** (18): A chilling novel (by Paul Bowles) filmed with a warning about the new nuclear age. Director: Michael Oast. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**THREE SISTERS** (12): Chekhov updated to the 1930s. Director: Michael Oast. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES** (PG): Teenage mutants. Director: Michael Oast. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**TIME OF THE GYPSIES** (15): New account of Yugoslav gypsy youngsters conscripted into the army. Director: Michael Oast. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**A WORLD WITHOUT PITY** (15): Life and loves of a Parisian layabout. Director: Michael Oast. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

**THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW**: A young man who is left alone at Christmas. Director: Ray Cooney. Screen on the Hill (071-438 3365) Whiteley (071-732 3333/3334).

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Answers from page 20

**TITUBATION**

(c) Stumbling, halting, from the Latin *titubare* to walk unsteadily. "That is my titubation." "What on earth is that?" "A halting or stumbling in my progress toward what I should be."

**SPELLTER**

(b) Zinc, especially impure zinc, cf. *LG spelter*. "An elderly finker sat admiring a bit of spelter. It was gold," he said."

**TCHOUKBALL**

(a) A team game in which a ball is thrown at a highly-oppo net, and one's opponents must try to prevent it from landing on the rebound within the playing area. It was invented in the early Seventies by a Swiss biologist, Hermann Brant. The tchouk of the name is an attempt to render verbally the noise the ball makes when it hits the net.

**SOC**

(c) The right of holding a local court, from the Old English *soc* inquiry, jurisdiction. "It may be questioned if this applied to any landowner who had soc of his own."

By Raymond Keene  
Chess Correspondent

**THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA**




\_\_\_\_\_

0.00 The Art of Landscape. Natural images set to music  
 0.20 Broken Day 6.30 The Channel Four Daily  
 0.20 School  
 0.20 **Broadcast Silence: Waste Not, Want Not.** How parasites and  
 canter aspers contribute to the maintenance of a natural balance  
 in the animal world (?)  
 0.30 **Business Day.** Financial and business news service 1.00  
 Seaside Street  
 1.00 That's Entertaining: **Incense and Ice Cream.** Richard Crowley  
 shows the New Zealanders how to arrange a dinner party with  
 the minimum of fuss (?) (Telexed)  
 1.30 **The Thatcher Audit: A Climate of Enterprise?** The first of three  
 programmes about the economic legacy of Margaret Thatcher.  
 John Plender of the *Financial Times* examines key Conservative  
 policies such as privatisation, trade union legislation and home  
 ownership  
 2.00 **Land of Hope: Loss of Innocence.** The first of a ten-part  
 Australian drama which chronicles four generations of an Anglo-  
 Irish working-class family in Australia from the late 1800s. With  
 Patrick Dickinson and Benjamin Franklin (?)  
 3.00 **Countdown.** Richard Whitley hosts the words and numbers quiz  
 4.00 **The Oprah Winfrey Show.** New KIds on the Block. The superstar  
 pop group gives a live performance 5.50 Mr Magoo. Cartoon  
 0. Kate & Allie: Max's Girlfriend (?)  
 0. Desmond's: Old de Front Page. Norman Beaton and Carmen  
 Monro lead the noisy barber shop sitcom, set in black Britain (?)  
 0.00 **Channel 4 News** with Jon Snow 7.50 Comment. Weather

**Class by Class: The Printer's Tale**  
 • CHOICE: Class is the most slippery of concepts and the deeper Ray Goeling goes into it, the more it threatens to fall through his fingers. Sensibly, his series starts from actual cases and works outwards, rather than setting up models and trying to find data to fit them. For example might is the Gowing family from Kent. The father is a printer, the mother a class classifier and a member of the working class. But what of his daughters, who have moved into the world of service industries and small businesses, and his grandson, the family's first university graduate? Perhaps in the end class is mainly subjective. If the Gowins are any guide, moving into the middle class means drinking wine, listening to "good" (that is, classical) music and not going on holiday to Benidorm. But what about the brother-in-law who runs a successful company, owns a Porsche and still insists that he is working class? (Teletext)  
 • 30: **Family Drama: The Golden Girls** (1992) When Lish Page (Rue McClanahan) of *The Golden Girls* is told that her mother has four single daughters her own life is more of being killed by terrorists than finding a husband, the worried mother becomes a matchmaker. Directed by Larry Elikann. (Teletext)

**20 True Stories: Death of a Runaway**  
**► CHOICE:** Channel 4's documentary strand makes a strong argument for the death and death of Elaine Ffolkes, a London teenager whose body was found last year in the river Thames. In the months before, she had run away from home on countless occasions, been in and out of local authority care and finally fallen into bad company. Her story has been reconstructed with the cooperation of her family and the police. A gripping, gripping film, the camera as they record the antecedents of the tragedy, there are extensive interviews, too, with classmates, boyfriends and police officers. But a watter of poignant testimony gives no plausible explanation as to why a youngster from a caring family should opt for such a horrendous end. The film is a powerful, powerful, powerful help. Perhaps the nearest thing to a clue is Elaine's diary, which reveals her state of mind in the 18 months leading up to her death



**A teenage rebel without a cause? Elaine Foley (10.20pm)**

11.50 Simply Marvelous 12.75pm <b>Sally</b> The 1950s <b>Style</b> <b>Fr. 1.10 Search</b> The <b>Law</b> 1.30 <b>The Edge of Night</b> <b>Fr. 1.40 The 1950s</b> <b>Fr. 2.15</b> <b>Fr. 2.30</b> <b>2.55 Lifestyle</b> <b>2.55</b> <b>Fr. 3.05</b> <b>3.35</b> <b>Remington Steele</b> <b>3.55</b> <b>Te. 4.05</b> <b>WKRP in Cincinnati</b> <b>4.35</b> <b>The American Gameshow</b> <b>8.00</b> <b>The</b> <b>Sellin Shopping Channel</b> <b>8.00</b> <b>JSTV</b> <b>10.00</b> <b>Sellin-Vision Shopping Channel</b> <b>12.00</b>	son accidentally swap bodies 10.00 <b>The Last Temptation</b> of <b>Christ</b> 1989 Controversial drama which looks at the human side of <b>Christ</b> ( <b>William Daft</b> ) 12.05pm <b>Bloodstone</b> (1988): A jewel thief hides his loot in luggage belonging to a homework couple 2.25 <b>The Resurrection</b> (1998): A terrorist attack awakens the remains of <b>alien</b>
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### THE MOVIE CHANNEL

• The Marzco Polo estate.  
 • 1930s The Movie Show  
 • You Were Never Lovelier (1942): Fred Astaire and Rita Hayworth star in this classic musical comedy.  
 • The Southern Star (1959): A varied treatment of adventures go in search of a cat. Starring George Segal and Orson Welles.  
 • Housekeeping (1987): The tale of two

### THE SPORTS CHANNEL

• Via the Marzco Polo satellite.  
 • 1.15pm Sports Channel, 1.30 Racing Today 2.00 FA Cup 3.30 Sports Channel 4.00 Fishing: The West 4.30 Gerald Williams Talks To... 5.00 The Sports Channel 6.00 The Sports Channel 7.00 The Sports Channel 7.30 Sports Channel 8.00 Bowling 10.00 Sports Channel 10.30 On Wheels 11.30 Racing Today 12.00 Sports Channel 12.25pm Bowling

**THE POWER STATION**  
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● BUSINESS AND FINANCE 23-27  
● SPORT 28-32

Executive Editor  
David Brewerton

## Take-off for Airbus operating profits

AIRBUS Industrie, the European aircraft consortium, has reported operating profits for the first time since its foundation over 20 years ago (Wolfgang Münchau writes).

Jean Pierson, the managing director, said the profits were "substantial" but refused to disclose the figures. Under French law, Airbus is not a company but a "groupe d'intérêt économique" (GIE), and not obliged to file accounts.

Last year, Airbus, which is owned by four European aerospace companies including British Aerospace with 20 per cent, delivered aircraft worth a total of £2.42 billion and had orders totalling £14.3 billion.

The news will boost long-standing plans by BAe and Deutsche Aerospace, a Daimler-Benz subsidiary with 37.9 per cent, to turn Airbus into a commercial operation, which would involve a change of its status under French law.

Over the years, Airbus has made strong inroads into the world aircraft market. A crucial test for the European consortium will be the decision by British Airways, which has yet to place an order for Airbus aircraft, over the replacement of its ageing DC10 and Tristar fleet. Airbus and Boeing are currently locked in a contest and BA is expected to announce its decision soon.

## NatWest cuts

COUNTY NatWest, the securities arm of National Westminster Bank, is offering voluntary redundancies to the 160 staff in its Tokyo operation and halving the size of its offices. The firm lost £10 million last year after the Tokyo stock market collapsed.

Comment, page 25

## Ratios reduced

The Bank of England is cutting the cash deposit ratios banks must keep interest free with it from 0.45 to 0.4 per cent of eligible liabilities. The Bank will return £190 million to commercial banks.

Comment, page 25

## THE POUND

US dollar  
1.9270 (+0.0205)  
German mark  
2.9146 (-0.0024)  
Exchange index  
94.0 (+0.1)

## STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share  
1688.5 (+31.6)  
FT-SE 100  
2128.9 (+29.0)  
New York Dow Jones  
2541.58 (+32.17)  
Tokyo Nikkei Ave  
22969.27 (+71.43)  
Closing Prices ... Page 27

## Major indices and major changes

Page 26

## INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base: 14%  
3-month interbank: 13 1/2-13 3/4%  
3-month eligible bills: 13 1/2-13 3/4%  
US: Prime Rate 9 1/2%  
Federal Funds 5 1/4%  
3-month Treasury Bills 6 3/4-6 3/8%  
30-year bonds 10 1/2-10 3/4%

## CURRENCIES

London: New York:  
£ \$1.9270  
£ DM2.9146  
£ Sfr2.4762  
£ FF10.0041  
£ Yen200.63  
£ Index94.0  
ECU £0.701703  
ECU £1.425104

## GOLD

London Fixing:  
AM \$289.70  
close \$287.00  
New York:  
Comex \$388.05-388.55

## NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Jan 1) ... \$23.06 bbl (\$26.30)  
Denotes latest trading price

## TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buy	Bank Sell
Australia \$	2.58	2.43
Austria Sch	21.50	20.10
Belgium Fr	2.34	2.14
Canada \$	11.76	11.08
Denmark Kr	13.75	12.84
Finland Mk	10.30	9.70
France Fr	3.045	2.855
Germany DM	2.25	2.05
Greece Dr	15.45	14.65
Hong Kong \$	1.145	1.075
Ireland Pt	2.72	2.57
Italy Lira	225	215
Japan Yen	343	322
Netherlands Gld	11.90	11.20
Norway Kr	5.40	4.80
Portugal Esc	191	179
Spain Ptas	166	154
Sweden Kr	13.75	12.84
Switzerland Sfr	2.45	2.25
Turkey Lira	500	460
USA \$	30.00	28.00
Yugoslavia Dnr	30.00	28.00

Rates for small denomination bank only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques.  
Retail Price Index: 130.0 (November)

# Wakeham limits sale of generators to 60%

By MARTIN WALLER

JOHN Wakeham, the energy secretary, has bowed to pressure from his Whitehall advisers and decided to limit the sale of the two electricity generators, National Power and PowerGen, to 60 per cent of the companies' shares at this stage.

The government will retain a 40 per cent stake in both for at least two years and, observers believe, probably significantly longer.

The decision will anger both the companies concerned and displace City investors, who have argued against a partial sale.

The apparent climb-down ends

weeks of speculation over just how the government would arrange the flotation of the generators and ensure no repeat of the fiasco that arose when it sold off the distributors. The decision came the day before the start of the formal marketing campaign for the sale.

Mr Wakeham claimed last night that the decision to go down the partial sale route had been taken on investment grounds and had nothing to do with the criticism that the government suffered after the distributors were sold, or with the current unstable conditions on the stock market.

Mr Wakeham said the decision

had been taken after the end of negotiations with the two companies over the level of debt they would carry post-privatisation and on dividend and profit forecasts.

"You can't make a decision on your investment until you see what you have got to sell," he said. "The view I took is that the generating businesses are really quite significantly different from the distribution companies."

The distributors are in a sense doing very much in the private sector what they are doing in the public sector. The generators are operating in a new market. I take the view that I want to be a holder of

those shares for the time being. I believe that those companies will be better appreciated by the market in two years' time."

The decision to sell just part of the generators was made to maximise proceeds for the Exchequer, he said.

Mr Wakeham added that the government retained the right to introduce further "innovations" into the flotation, apparently a reference to a possible sale by tender of some of the shares.

Three of the 12 distributors in England and Wales have said they are well on track for the profit and dividend forecasts made in the prospectus late last year. Northern

made pre-tax profits of £35 million in the six months to end-September. Southern made £23.7 million in the same period, and the corresponding figure from East Midlands was £14.8 million.

The figures cover the first six months of the year for which the companies have already issued profit forecasts and are the first to be released by a distributor. They also reveal that the three incurred restructuring and privatisation costs totalling £8.9 million in the first half, during which they were still owned by the government.

Wakeham bites bullet, page 25

## NEDC rejects call to realign

By PHILIP BASSETT  
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

THE government, Bank of England, business leaders and trade unions have united in rejecting any idea of a realignment of sterling within the European exchange-rate mechanism.

The united front came in response to suggestions from some economists for a revaluation of the pound from its level of DM2.95, plus or minus 6 per cent. They claim the government took Britain into the ERM at too high an exchange rate, and believe a realignment would allow Britain to reduce interest rates.

The idea was rejected, however, at the quarterly meeting of the National Economic Development Council.

Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, insisted that there was no question of the government making any change in sterling's level within the ERM.

He was joined by Robin Leigh-Pemberton, governor of the Bank of England, and Sir Brian Corby, president of the Confederation of British Industry, who both spoke about how damaging to the economy any realignment would be.

They maintained that any realignment so soon after ERM entry would create expectations of further downward realignments in the future, and would eventually lead to interest rates being higher, rather than lower. The CBI pressed its case again for lower interest rates.

The TUC said a realignment at a time when other countries were doing the same would be helpful, but Mr Leigh-Pemberton said other countries in Europe were proud of not having revalued over the last four years, and so the likelihood of such a concerted move was extremely small.

Mr Lamont accepted that 1991 would be a "difficult year", but expected there to be good progress in the reduction of inflation during the year. He said he did not take it amiss that there might be a "modest" deficit overall in a recessionary year, provided there was a balanced budget over the unspecified period of the economic cycle as a whole.

Both the Bank of England and the Bank of Scotland said British banks had supported industrial companies throughout the Eighties and would continue to do so.

# Oil price soars on breakdown of Geneva talks

By OUR CITY STAFF

OIL prices soared within minutes of the American statement in Geneva that peace talks had failed.

In New York, Nymex futures rose more than \$6 to \$30 as James Baker, the American secretary of state was speaking, reversing earlier falls on hopes of a peaceful solution. Wall Street, which had been up more than 40 points earlier in the day, was up 2.48 and falling fast at 2,511.88.

Earlier in London, the price of oil fell to levels last seen before the invasion of Kuwait, with February Brent down \$4.40 a barrel to \$22.30.

Share prices had risen in London on early New York trading. London closed near its best levels of the day. The FT-SE 100 index finished 29.0 up at 2,128.9. The dollar dropped sharply against the pound and the German mark.

Brent crude for February delivery had fallen as fears of massive disruption to oil fields in the Middle East had receded, trading below \$23, a level last seen on August 3, the day before the invasion of Kuwait.

Share prices had made strong gains. A near 40-point rise during the first hour of trading on Wall Street had enabled London to close near its best levels of the day. But trading remained very thin with a turnover of just 405 million shares.

The dollar had dropped

sharply as the currency markets thought the extended talks between America and Iraq were a sign that the chances of a peaceful settlement in the Gulf had increased.

With less need to seek a safe haven, dealers started sell the dollar in late afternoon while Mr Baker and Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, were still talking in Geneva.

It fell almost three pence against the pound by 2.5 pence, also shedding nearly two cents against the dollar in late afternoon while Mr Baker and Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, were still talking in Geneva.

Jim O'Neill, currency economist at Swiss Bank Corp, saw the Geneva message being "peace is a weak dollar" with the main beneficiary the yen. "The pound does not like peace either," he said.

Sterling had managed to gain against the mark, which under pressure from fears of unrest in the Soviet Union, moved above DM2.9250, before easing back as its safe-haven quality faded.

In London it ended almost a quarter of a penny weaker from Tuesday's close at DM2.9146, slipping below the French franc at the bottom end of the exchange-rate mechanism, but holding above the Danish krone. Against the retreating dollar it advanced nearly two cents to \$1.9270 at the London close.

The trade-weighted index finished 0.1 point higher at 94. Oil prices had been driven lower by a report from the International Energy Agency, which monitors oil output and consumption, estimating that crude stocks held by western nations now cover three months of forward consumption, an eight-year high.

The agency, based in Paris, is to meet tomorrow to consider what action to take in the event of war. According to the agency, the 24 members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development are holding 469 million tonnes of oil after building up stocks at a rate of 200,000 barrels per day (bpd) in the final three months of 1990. The IEA had forecast a draw-down of 500,000 bpd.

Oil producing nations hold about 100 million barrels of unsold oil, twice normal levels. Saudi Arabia and Iran account for 50 per cent of Opec's average daily output of 23.5 million barrels in December, up from 23.2 million in November. Saudi output was maintained at 8.2 million bpd for the second consecutive month.

Supplies from the North Sea, one of the largest sources of oil outside the Middle East, were unchanged from November at 4.1 million barrels per day.

Markets, page 26  
Comment, page 25



Gasping for lower interest rates: John Hardman, chairman of Asda, yesterday

## Growing Asda falls to £61m

By COLIN CAMPBELL

ASDA Group, the food-to-furnishings supermarket group that paid £705 million for 60 Gateway outlets last year, says higher interest rates hurt profits in the six months to November 10 and the retail sales climate in 1991 is likely to remain "unsympathetic".

John Hardman, chairman, adds the programme of converting Gateway outlets is on time and on budget, and the benefits of this will be evident in Asda's 1992 full year. Pre-tax profits in the 28 weeks to November 10 were

£60.8 million against £83.5 million, on a group turnover of £2.25 billion (£1.59 billion). The interim dividend is an unchanged 1.85p a share.

Asda's results were above general market expectations, and the shares rose 6p to 124p.

Total sales within the original Asda chain rose by 15.7 per cent, with non-food up by 7.7 per cent. "A notable achievement in difficult markets," Mr Hardman said.

He said the household, leisure, clothing and footwear departments had outperformed the market in difficult trading conditions, but that

Allied Maples had shown a £3.2 million operating loss compared with a previous £3.8 million operating profit because of the effect of high interest rates on turnover.

Asda paid £42 million in interest on borrowings in the first half compared with net receipts of £4.5 million in the first half previously, but says costs are under tight control.

Mr Hardman believes the prospects for food sales are encouraging in 1991, and that non-food interests will continue to perform well.

Tempus, page 25

## Dixons ahead of forecasts at £27m

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

DIXONS Group, the electrical retailer that incorporates Currys, had a better Christmas than most stores groups with strong sales of camcorders, computers and home faxes.

Total takings were up on last year and the average ticket price rose 9 per cent at Christmas. The trading margin has also improved. Stanley Kalms, the group's chairman, said the January sale had started well and he is cautiously optimistic for the year.

Pre-tax profits for the group were higher than expected at £27.2 million, down from £32 million in the six months to November 10. Sales fell from £910 million to £812 million and earnings per share fell from 4.9p to 3.4p. The interim dividend is held at 1.6p.

Analysts upgraded their profits forecasts for the year. Warburg's forecast has risen from £55 million to £60 million. John Smith, at Phil-

lips & Drew, has increased his forecast from £58 million to £68 million. The shares rose 7p to 146p.

Extended warranties helped pushed retail profits in Britain to £11.9 million, including £5 million of excess provisions from the warranty business. Property profits held up well in difficult market conditions, contributing £9.8 million (down from £25 million).

Dixons' sales on a like-for-like basis were 2.5 per cent lower in the first half but significantly up from the end of August. At Currys, superstore like-for-like sales rose 2.4 per cent but high street sales fell 10.1 per cent.

In America, Silo made a loss of £2.3 million, down from a profit of £1.1 million. Mr Kalms says American business is suffering from a full-blooded recession.

Tempus, page 23

## Pan Am owes \$4m to UK companies

From PHILIP ROBINSON IN NEW YORK

BRITISH companies are owed more than \$4 million by the collapsed airline Pan American and rank among its 20 largest creditors, according to papers filed with the New York bankruptcy court. Pan Am's debts total almost \$1 billion.

BAA, formerly the British Airports Authority, is owed \$2.5 million in landing fees and other rent and Pan Am still owes British Airways \$1.5 million from a legal action filed after the collapse of the Freddie Laker Skytrain a decade ago. A Pan Am spokesman said both payments had been frozen.

But because Pan Am airlines are still flying and using its facilities, BAA is being paid on a short term basis. The spokesman could not give immediate details of how this is being done. A BAA spokesman said that the \$2.5 million owed it by Pan Am was

regarded as "a good debt". He said: "If necessary we could always seize their aircraft but that is not our intention at the moment. Pan Am are still operating and will doubtless settle this in the usual way."

Airlines often pay their landing fees and other charges months in arrears and it would not be unusual for an airline of Pan Am's size to run up outstanding debts of the amount now owed. Pan Am's largest creditor is its own pension fund, owed \$490 million. The carrier, America's seventh largest and the third to go bankrupt in two years, owes \$2.5 million to its long-distance telephone company, American Telephone & Telegraph, and is disputing an American Inland Revenue claim of \$20.2 million. Topping the list of banks which bought Pan Am debt is Midland National Bank, owed \$230 million.

## Sir Michael fires salvo at brokers

By NIEL BENNETT

SIR Michael Richardson is not a man who bothers with dining room small talk. So when he spoke to guests at a press lunch in Tokyo yesterday, he treated them to the bleakest forecast yet made of the outlook for City stockbroking firms.

Sir Michael, the recently-appointed chairman of Smith New Court, the independent stockbroker, told journalists that the number of market-making firms in London would halve in the next three years from the present total of 27.

"The Big Bang was a double-barrelled shotgun," he declared. "The second trigger will go off. There will be further job losses and bankers and merchant bankers will have to realign themselves."

Sir Michael applauded the Japanese for their cautious approach in the City since Big Bang and said there was now scope for agreed takeovers by Japanese

firms. "One or two merchant banks in London could be for sale," he said. "Japanese firms would be welcome if they came in now."

Quite why Sir Michael should reveal his prognostications in an off-the-cuff speech in Tokyo's Foreign Correspondent's Club is unclear. He was on his first visit to Smith's office in the Japanese capital since taking up his appointment last May. Smith's senior executives quickly distanced themselves from the speech, saying his remarks were not the views of the firm. They stressed he was not negotiating the sort of offer or co-operation deal his speech advocated.

Even so, it is a timely warning of the difficulties London's brokers are still suffering.

The first barrel of the shotgun has already had its effect throughout the City. After the crash, employment in

London stockbrokers fell by 1,100 to 24,400 by the end of 1989 from its peak in 1988, and is thought to have fallen by more than 1,000 since. And there has been a gradual retreat from market-making. Well-known casualties include Morgan Grenfell, Laing & Cruckshank, Kitcat & Aitken and Chase Manhattan.

The trigger to the second barrel may well have been fired when Iraq invaded Kuwait. The slump in the second half of 1990 has already caused casualties. Barclays de Zoete Wedd, Laing & Cruckshank, County NatWest and Hoare Govett all announced redundancy programmes just before Christmas.

Until now, however, most major firms have preferred to cut back their market-making and broking arms, rather than suffer the indignity of outright closure. If fighting begins in the Gulf next week it may rob the loss-makers of this option.

## GUESS WHERE IN BRITAIN THE CRIME RATE IS ACTUALLY FALLING?

There's only one major conurbation in Britain where the overall crime rate fell last year.

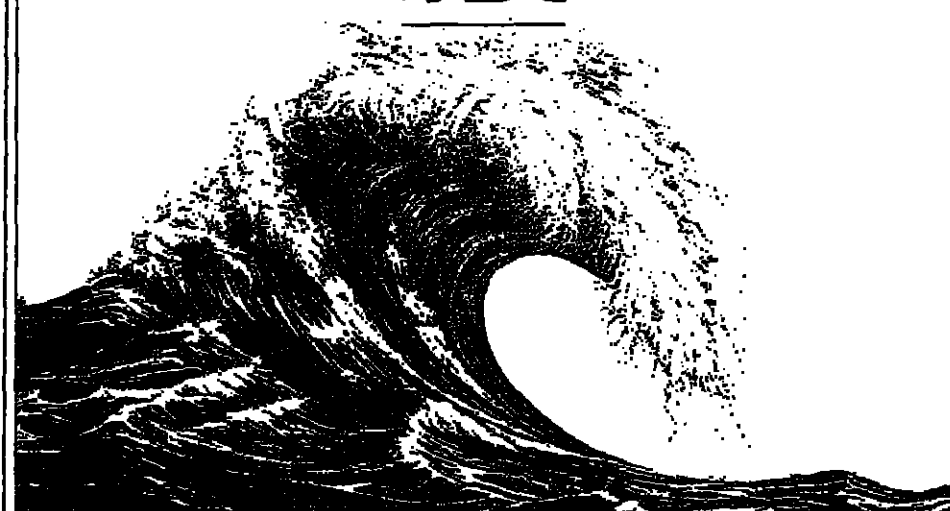
What's more, in established industrial areas, burglary and theft was down for the fourth year in succession.

And for businesses on land regenerated by the area's Development Corporation, last year's reduction was a dramatic 28%.

Where is it? Surprisingly, it's Merseyside.

We can tell you hundreds of surprising facts about Merseyside, and its unique new wave of investment opportunity. Write to Harvey Sunderland, Merseyside Development Corporation, Dept 02, Royal Liver Building, Pier Head, Liverpool L3 1JH - or dial 100 and ask for freephone 1723.

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## هكذا من الأصل







## Sterling 'will not be realigned this year'

By PHILIP BASSETT  
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

STERLING'S exchange rate within the European exchange-rate mechanism will not be realigned within the next 12 months, the London Business School has forecast.

Pressure for a realignment is growing, with a number of companies, industries and other organisations believing that Britain entered at too high a rate.

But the London Business School said yesterday it was difficult to see any realignment before an election. Geoffrey Dicks, a senior research fellow, told a conference in London organised by the Chemical Industries Association that a "lot of political capital" had been invested in the ERM by the government and because of that it was difficult to see any likelihood of realignment.

He said: "It was John Major who put us in the ERM and I do not believe he will try to flout the rules in the first year."

Mr Dicks forecast that interest rates would be reduced and said that an indication of this was the government's insistence that they would not be cut. "You can only cut interest rates if you are perceived by the market as not wanting to do so."

The government's statements that rates would not be cut had taken sterling off its ERM floor and was taking it closer to a point at which they could be safely cut.

Interest rates could justifiably be reduced with a real inflation prediction of 5 per cent this year. There was no reason why they should not be 13 per cent after the Budget and 12 per cent by mid-year.

Mr Dicks forecast large-scale destocking in the first half of this year, with the prospect of an "anemic" recovery in 1992.

## Prices boosted on apparent progress in peace talks

THE progress apparently made early in the Geneva peace talks cheered world stock markets, enabling prices in London to recover partly after their recent sharp falls.

The FT-SE 100 index closed near its best level of the day, 2,900 up at 2,128.9, boosted by an opening surge of almost 40 points on Wall Street. The FT index of 30 shares finished 31.6 higher at 1,668.5. But the turnover of 405.9 million shares scarcely justified the rise. Market-makers are continuing to operate small positions in order to keep their books balanced. This often leads to sharp fluctuations in prices.

Equities took their lead from the futures market where the March FT-SE 100 series

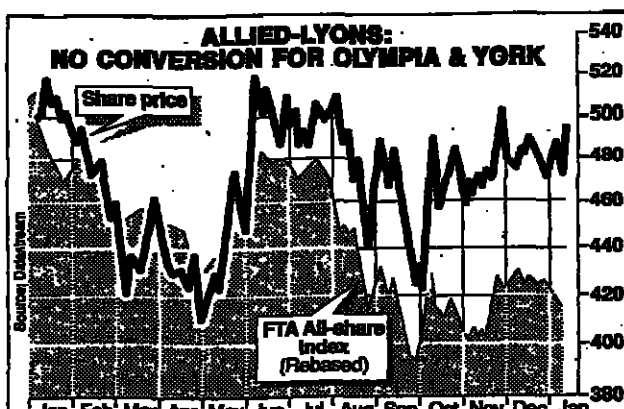
Great Universal Stores' A shares rose 15p to £11.19. Laing & Crutchfield, the broker, says it is an ideal share for 1991. It expects pre-tax profits to grow from £407 million to £425 million and says the A shares fall to reflect the possibility that they may be unfranchised.

continued to trade at a 50-point premium. But last night dealers were warning that as the January 15 deadline draws nearer, a breakdown in the talks could see the sharp gains reversed.

Government securities benefited from a strong pound and revived speculation of a cut in base rates before the end of January. Prices at the longer end rose 5 1/2.

The small of cheaper money also cheered the banks. Barclays rose 5p to 354p, Lloyds 10p to 293p, Midland 5p to 179p, Standard Chartered 8p to 240p and TSB Group 4p to 133p.

The opening rise on Wall Street enabled those com-



panies with a big exposure in America to claw back some of this week's losses. Reuters rose 15p to 702p, Glaxo 11p to 826p, and KCL 15p to 880p.

The fall in the price of oil gave some comfort to those with high fuel bills. British Airways rose 8p to 148p, NCF 4p to 126p, and P&O 12p to 512p.

London International, the surgical products group, was a weak market in late trading, falling 7p to 239p amid talk of a rights issue. But David Harbut, the finance director, said: "These are just market rumours. I have no comment."

Dixons, the high street electrical goods retailer, rose 2p to 141p despite reporting a dip in interim pre-tax profits from £32 million to £27.2 million. The figure was at the top end of City forecasts with Stanley Kalms, the chairman, announcing that the group had improved both margins and market share despite depressed conditions. But he issued a warning that operat-

ing profits in the United States were down.

The Asda supermarket chain also pleased with interim figures at the top end of the range. Pre-tax profits were, as expected, down from £83.5 million to £60.8 million. Profits were hit by interest charges of £42 million. Food sales were encouraging with non-food sales benefiting from the expansion of the George Deas range of clothes. The shares ended 4p up at 122p.

Allied-Lyons shrugged off recent weakness to finish 16p dearer at 490p. Olympia & York, the Canadian property group, has decided against converting its preference stock into ordinary shares. The stock became due for conversion on January 1 at 457p a share and would have resulted in O&Y ending up with almost 10 per cent of Allied.

An O&Y spokesman in New York said: "Olympia & York has no intention of converting, until the company (Allied) can compel such a conversion."

### TRADITIONAL OPTIONS

First Dealings January 18 Last Dealings April 18  
Call options were written on 9/10/91. Single Secure Homes, T Cowie, Aviva  
Put: Last Service.

### THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

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1 JANUARY 10 1991  
OUNDRUP  
ay contest  
for Telfos

50 (من لاهل)

## Portfolio PLATINUM

From your Portfolio Platinum card check your eight share price movements on this page only. Add them up to give you your overall total and check this against the daily dividend figure. If it matches you have won outright or a share of the daily prize money stated. If you win, follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. Always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No.	Company	Group	Close	Change
1	Rolls-Royce (ns)	Motor, Aircraft	140.00	1.00
2	Standard Chart (ns)	Bank, Discount	10.00	0.00
3	Read Ltd (ns)	Engineering	10.00	0.00
4	Warner Howard	Industrial S-Z	10.00	0.00
5	Wolfschlaeger Bank	Chemicals, Fine	10.00	0.00
6	JS Pathology	Medical, Health	10.00	0.00
7	Hawker Siddeley (ns)	Industrial S-Z	10.00	0.00
8	Jefferies	Motor, Aircraft	10.00	0.00
9	De La Rue	Industrial A-D	10.00	0.00
10	Nine Foods (ns)	Food	10.00	0.00
11	SA Breweries	Breweries	10.00	0.00
12	SA Breweries	Industrial S-Z	10.00	0.00
13	SA Breweries	Industrial S-Z	10.00	0.00
14	Lafarge (ns)	Chemicals, Fine	10.00	0.00
15	NPC	Transport	10.00	0.00
16	Bourne End	Food	10.00	0.00
17	Midland (ns)	Bank, Discount	10.00	0.00
18	De Tabor (ns)	Chemicals	10.00	0.00
19	Hardwood Foods	Food	10.00	0.00
20	New Corp	Engineering	10.00	0.00
21	Pittman (ns)	Industrial L-R	10.00	0.00
22	Cable Wireless (ns)	Electricals	10.00	0.00
23	Sainsbury's (ns)	Food	10.00	0.00
24	Dixons (ns)	Food	10.00	0.00
25	First Nat Fin	Bank, Discount	10.00	0.00
26	Canada (ns)	Industrial S-Z	10.00	0.00
27	Montagu	Property	10.00	0.00
28	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
29	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
30	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
31	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
32	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
33	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
34	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
35	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
36	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
37	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
38	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
39	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
40	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
41	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
42	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
43	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
44	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
45	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
46	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
47	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
48	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
49	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00
50	Bowthorpe	Electricals	10.00	0.00

Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend						
Please make a note of your daily totals for the weekly dividend of £2,000 in Saturday's newspaper.						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	TOTAL

There were no valid claims for the Portfolio Platinum prize yesterday. The £2,000 will be added to today's competition.

### BRITISH FUNDS

1990/91	High	Low	Open	Close	Net	Div
SHORTS (Under Five Years)						
1	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
2	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
3	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
4	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
5	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
6	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
7	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
8	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
9	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
10	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
11	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
12	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
13	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
14	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
15	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
16	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
18	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
19	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
20	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
21	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
22	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
23	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
24	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
25	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
26	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
27	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
28	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
29	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
30	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
31	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
32	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
33	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
34	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
35	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
36	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
37	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
38	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
39	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
40	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
41	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
42	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
43	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
44	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
45	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
46	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
47	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
48	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
49	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
50	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00

FIVE TO FIFTEEN YEARS						
1	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
2	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
3	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
4	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
5	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
6	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
7	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
8	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
9	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
10	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
11	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
12	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
13	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
14	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
15	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
16	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
18	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
19	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
20	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
21	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
22	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
23	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
24	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
25	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
26	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
27	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
28	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
29	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
30	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
31	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
32	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
33	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
34	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
35	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
36	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
37	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
38	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
39	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
40	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
41	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
42	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
43	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
44	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
45	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
46	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
47	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
48	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
49	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00
50	100.00	99.00	99.50	99.50	0.00	0.00

OVER FIFTEEN YEARS						
84%	86%	True	8% 2002-06	82	++	9.7 10.392
86%	73%	True	51% 2007	85%	++	8.3 9.176
111	55%	True	11% 2005-07	100	++	10.0 10.882
93%	77%	True	13% 2004-08	91%	++	8.5 10.091
100	77%	True	13% 2004-08	121%	++	11.1 10.499
85%	86%	True	8% 2009	82%	++	9.6 10.655
94	77%	Conv	9% 2011-12	91	++	9.0 9.577
63%	50%	True	53% 2012-15	78%	++	9.7 10.070
82%	87%	True	7% 2012-15	78%	++	9.7 10.070
94	87%	True	1% 2013-17	110%	++	10.2 10.571









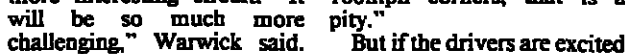


Second  
and  
third  
off



On the comeback trail: Ben Johnson, with his coach, Loren Seagrave, and Mike Tyson, in front of his manager, Don King, are preparing the way for their respective returns to the spotlight in 1991. Johnson competes in an indoor 50 metres at Hamilton, Ontario, tomorrow and Tyson is setting his sights on regaining the world heavyweight boxing title

## MOTOR RACING



## MOTOR RALLYING

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## CRICKET

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## SPORT

# Dismissals threat to reputation for English fair play

By CLIVE WHITE

ENGLISH football's strict adherence to the new Fifa directive on foul play is in danger of ruining the reputation it has recently acquired abroad for fair play, Gordon Taylor, the chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, said yesterday.

In Bonn on Tuesday, England received the team award for fair play at last year's World Cup finals and Gary Lineker an individual award for an outstanding disciplinary record, but Taylor said that English League football was threatening to undo all the good work of last summer and the last few years by applying the letter rather than the spirit of the law in connection with the Fifa edict. "I feel we're in danger of shooting ourselves in the foot," he said.

English League games are watched all around the world and Taylor is worried that a misleading picture is being relayed about the standard of English discipline on the field. Until January 1, 122 players had been sent off in competitive games in England and Wales this season, compared to 92 at the same point last season. The Football Association said that 35 of those dismissals were for what is loosely and nowadays inaccurately described as the "professional foul".

An FA spokesman said yesterday that he did not think that the situation was "over-alarming" and admitted that the figures were comparable with those of last season, when overall discipline improved for the fourth year in succession "if you consider that so

many were for the professional foul".

Taylor saw it differently. "I think statistics are tending to damn us rather than praise us," he said. Taylor took great encouragement from the fact that, for the first time in many years, not a single club was brought before the FA at the end of last season to explain its disciplinary record. "Now there appears to be a general clean-up campaign at a time when the streets are getting tidier," he said. Taylor was also concerned that a heavy-handed approach by officials could affect the entertainment value of the game if teams were reduced to ten or nine men by sendings-off.

When the FA took it upon itself in the 1982-3 season to issue a directive (which it was later forced to rescind by Fifa) instructing referees to send off players guilty of denying an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, it was solely for what was euphemistically described at the time as the "professional foul" and of a cynical nature.

The complaint of many people within the game this season is that the Fifa directive is being applied too literally. The "professional foul" is being classed as serious foul play. To many onlookers, for instance, Kevin Moran, of Blackburn Rovers, seemed to be guilty of no more than obstruction when he was alleged to have brought down Ian Rush, of Liverpool, in an FA Cup third-round tie on Saturday, an offence for which he was sent off.

Kenny Dalglish, the man-

ager of Liverpool, called for urgent talks between the game's administrators and participants after the second Liverpool player in four days was sent off in the Cup replay on Tuesday. Liverpool's disciplinary record has been among the best in the League for several years.

Talks, however, between the game's various bodies were organised some weeks ago. There will be six regional meetings up and down the country, starting at Old Trafford, Manchester, on January 22.

Their aim is to achieve mutual understanding between players and officials, improved relationships and a greater tolerance of one another's problems and of the laws of the game. The meetings will be attended by the FA, the Football League, the Association of Football League Referees and Linemen, the Football League Executive Staff Association and the PFA.

Steve McMahon, the Liverpool and England midfielder, who was sent off at Anfield on Tuesday, will be suspended for one match and not two as widely reported, the FA said yesterday. He will not accrue any more disciplinary points, since the sending off for two bookable offences is deemed sufficient punishment.

Consequently, he will miss only the FA Cup fourth-round tie against Brighton at Anfield on January 26 and will be available for the televised game against Manchester United on February 3.

## Liverpool close to capturing Carter

JIMMY Carter, the Millwall forward, is expected to complete an £800,000 transfer to Liverpool within the next 48 hours (Ian Ross writes).

The clubs reopened negotiations yesterday after the second-division club had rejected the Football League champions' initial bid of around £600,000, which was lodged earlier in the week.

Although Kevin Keegan, the Millwall chairman, said yesterday that he did not wish to sell Carter, he admitted a deal was likely if Liverpool met his asking price.

Carter, aged 25, joined Millwall from Queen's Park Rangers in 1987 for £15,000 after beginning his career as an apprentice at Crystal Palace.

If the transfer does go ahead it will mark the first stage of Liverpool's rebuilding programme as they prepare for a return to European football for the first time since the Heysel tragedy in 1985. Because of new UEFA regulations, only four non-nationals are allowed to play in the big European competitions. At present, 11 of Liverpool's recognised senior squad of 18

players are deemed to be "foreigners".

Viv Anderson, Manchester United's former England international defender, yesterday agreed to join Sheffield Wednesday, in a bid to resurrect a career blighted by injury.

Anderson, aged 34, moves to Hillsborough on a free transfer after playing just 50 League games for United.

"I was a little reluctant to let him go because his influence on this club's younger players is most beneficial," Alex Ferguson, the United manager, said. Anderson is likely to make his debut for Wednesday in Saturday's game against Hull City at Boothferry Park, where he could find himself in opposition to Jim Leighton, his former United team-mate, who now seems certain to join the Yorkshire club on loan.

"We want to make sure that we are well covered for our run-in. Viv is very versatile and can play either at full back or in the centre of defence," Ron Atkinson, the Wednesday manager, said.

## Prisoner waits for Woking

THE FA Cup underdogs, Woking, may call on the services of a player serving a prison sentence when they meet Everton in the fourth round at Goodison Park.

Andy Parr, a midfielder player, could be released from Springhill Open Prison in Buckinghamshire for a day to play in the game, should Woking select him. The prison governor, David Wilson, has told Parr, who is serving a 12-month sentence for fraud, that he can leave the prison for the day of the tie only.

Parr, aged 24, said after being called before the prison's board of governors: "For a moment I thought I'd done something wrong and was due for a telling-off. Then I got the good news and I'm over the moon."

Wilson said: "I'm a Liverpool supporter so I shall be delighted if Woking go through. Parr has been extremely well-behaved since he's been here and deserves the chance of playing for his club if they need him."

The tie has, meanwhile, been switched from Saturday, January 26 to Sunday, January 27, on the advice of Merseyside police.

Woking, who defeated West Bromwich Albion at the Hawthorns in the competition's third round last weekend, were drawn at home against the first-division club but decided to surrender ground advantage because their Kingfield stadium has a capacity of just 6,000.

"As Liverpool were drawn at home, and we were not, we did not contest the decision," Jim Greenwood, the Everton chief executive, said.

## United States secures double gold



Mouth watering: Biondi savours his success after winning the 100 metres freestyle

## Biondi takes the blue riband

PERTH (Reuters) — Matt Biondi, of the United States, eased to a comfortable win in the blue-riband event — the 100 metres freestyle — in the world swimming championships in Perth, Australia, yesterday.

After an indifferent championship entrance in the 100 metres butterfly, in which he finished sixth, Biondi showed vastly improved form as he dominated the race. The Olympic champion's time of 49.18sec was slower than his world record of 48.42sec, and the 48.94sec he recorded in his 1986 world championship victory, but it was too fast for his rivals.

Tommy Werner, of Sweden, took the silver medal in 49.63sec while Giorgio Lamberti, the European champion, of Italy, was third in 49.82sec.

"It's great to be a world champion," Biondi, winner of seven medals at the 1986 world championships and 1988 Olympics, said. "I wish my time could've been faster but a victory is a victory."

Janet Evans gained further success for the United States with a rousing win in the women's 400 metres freestyle, turning the tables on Hayley Lewis, aged 16, of Australia, who beat the American to gold in the 200 metres freestyle on Tuesday.

Evans never let Lewis get ahead and sped home in 4min 08.63sec. Lewis took silver in 4min 09.40sec with Suzu Chiba, of Japan, third in 4min 11.44sec.

Martin López-Zubero gave Spain their first gold medal in world championship history when making a well-timed late charge for victory in the men's 200 metres backstroke.

Heralding a new era, page 28

## Vikings scrape into League

By KETH MACKLIN

SCARBOROUGH Vikings yesterday became the 36th member of the Rugby Football League, and three divisions moved inexorably nearer. However, the vote of council members at Leeds was by the narrowest possible margin, 20-9 with one abstention in a required two-thirds majority, after a 90-minute debate which was described by the League's chief executive, David Oxley, as "the toughest and most searching of these discussions I can remember".

Scarborough became the first new club since Chorley two seasons ago after a presentation by the chairman of Scarborough Football Club, Geoffrey Richmond, who will be chairman of the limited company that will control the new second division club, which will operate from the start of next season.

Richmond, who is chairman of Ronson plc, said that he anticipated crowds of around 2,000 at Scarborough's home matches. He was confident the club would be

financially viable from the first day. There was initial share capital of £100,000, with more in reserve.

He said that although Scarborough FC had the lowest crowd average of 1,600 in the Football League, the club had made a small profit last season, and the new rugby league club would be subject to similar stringent financial controls. The application had been backed by Scarborough Council, and he had personally received more than 200 letters of local support.

He was subjected to searching questions from sceptical council members who doubted his optimistic forecast of 2,000 attendances when the second division average is around 1,000.

Richmond fielded the questions with patience and aplomb, disclosing that discussions were taking place with a potential coach already well known within the game. When the outcome was announced, Oxley said: "The questions that were asked

were sensible and proper, but in the end we voted for the spirit of commitment, positive thinking and adventure. We are pushing out from our heartland." Oxley added that Scarborough would have a wide catchment area for support and players including York and Humberside, which are thriving rugby league areas.

The League will expedite its commitment to the establishment of three divisions by 1992-3, though Oxley was at pains to say that this was not dependent on Scarborough's entry. "The application deserved to succeed and would have done so regardless of three divisions."

Ironically, Scarborough's admission came on a day when two existing clubs, Huddersfield and Bramley, put out distress signals. Huddersfield need an urgent injection of £75,000 to survive the season, while Bramley have received a heavy repair bill from their local authority.

## Gooch's motley army with no big field guns

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, MELBOURNE

IN THE course of a gripping Test match in Sydney, England managed to recover most of the fundamentals that they had carelessly mislaid all around Australia. Their batting was hugely improved, their bowling at least partly so. But as they prepared for a different challenge in Melbourne today one important area of anxiety remained.

England's fielding has disintegrated. It is not so much the dropped catches, for they can happen to any side and have so far been within reasonable limits. It is the ground fielding, until quite recently England's pride and joy, which is embarrassingly sub-standard and potentially costly.

So bad has it become that England were confronting today's final qualifying match against Australia in the World Series Cup competition, a game they must win, uncomfortably aware that they could be eliminated from next week's lucrative finals by their own hapless fumbling.

Graham Gooch, speaking immediately after the drawn third Test, confirmed what everyone watching the game could see for themselves. "Our fielding simply wasn't good enough," he said. "We are going to have to work much harder on it."

With respect to the captain, this may not provide the answer. At every practice, England devote a lot of time, some would say a disproportionate amount, to fielding work. Their routines may not have the snap or the imagination of Australian training methods, which are strikingly good, but the players are all put through protracted catching, followed by groundwork and throwing.

That they still cannot field adequately is not for want of practice; nor, in all but the isolated, indolent case, is it for the want of trying. The real problem, not to put too fine a point on it, is that England have a team populated by the aged, the infirm, the clumsy and the ham-fisted.

If this sounds harsh, examine the evidence. Of the four in the party who are over 35, Gooch and Lamb are basically sound fielders compromised by the injuries increasingly afflicting them; Larkins and

Hemmings are in the category a captain would wish to hide. England, however, have too many of similar shortcomings.

Gower is quicker over the ground than anyone in the side but his fleetfootedness is next to useless because his shoulder condition, augmented by a wrist injury, means he cannot throw.

Tufnell and Fraser have apparently improved a good deal through hard work with Middlesex but there are times when you would not know it. Tufnell's problem is carelessness; Fraser is clumsy. As Malcolm is prone to gaffes even when his back is not troubling him, Atherton is a good catcher but a slow mover, and even Small's concentration has wavered too often of late, this leaves only Stewart and Smith who can be classified without reservation as fielders of international class.

In a one-day game, still more than in a Test match, it is not possible for Gooch to protect all his weaknesses and, within the party, this is a problem that will not go away.

If this was the gloomy postscript to the third Test, there was also much to encourage. As Allan Border ran off the field at the end of the game, he grinningly wiped imaginary beads of perspiration from his brow, testimony to the concern he had felt during England's courageous rally. "I think," he said yesterday, "they are gathering some momentum and will be much harder to beat from now on."

Another gallant near-miss would not, however, be sufficient today in the cauldron of the floodlit Melbourne Cricket Ground. England not only needed to beat Australia, for the first time in four attempts, they also needed a run-rate of 4.38 an over to prevent New Zealand dashing back across the Tasman Sea in time for Sunday's first of three finals.

Gooch spent so much time in Sydney covering his eyes against clumsy and gauche fielding errors that he might have had nightmares last night about something similar costing England dear today.

Prospects for A team, page 30

## Peace at a price at Australian Open

FROM BARRY WOOD IN SYDNEY

THE Australian anti-apartheid movement has failed to win its demand for a payment of Aus\$10,000 to guarantee that there will be no disruption of the Australian Open tennis championships which begin in Melbourne on Monday.

The group also requested that collection boxes should be made available during the final four days of the event to gather donations for the development of multi-racial tennis in South Africa.

The Australian Open is a regular target for the protesters, who have previously disrupted the tournament by throwing black balls onto the court during play and picketing at the gates. Although the organisers have refused to pay, it has been agreed that collection facilities will be provided.

No South African flag will be flown at the National Tennis Centre and, in addition, the council of Tennis Australia will discuss the possibility of offering financial or other forms of assistance to the movement. As a result, no demonstrations or disruption to the tournament will take place within the precincts, and no industrial action will be taken by the unions.

Jakob Hlasek, the fourth seed.

was beaten 3-6, 7-6, 6-4 by Michael Stich in the second round of the Holden New South Wales Open in Sydney yesterday while the second seed, Jonas Svensson, lost 3-6, 6-4, 6-4 to his fellow-Swede, Magnus Gustafsson, in a match that had been continued from the previous day when it was interrupted by rain. These were two more blows to a tournament that had already lost its No. 1 seed, Ivan Lendl, through injury.

In the women's event, Arantxa Sánchez Vicario, of Spain, used her usual powerful baseline game, spiced with devastating serve, to win her second-round match against Alexia Dechaume, of France.

The second seed was always in control, taking just over an hour to win through by 6-3, 6-1.

● ADELAIDE: Boris Becker's preparations for the Australian Open suffered another setback when he was beaten in three sets by Goran Ivanisevic, of Yugoslavia, in his opening match of the six-man Rio Challenge exhibition tournament (AP reports). Ivanisevic served 21 aces in beating Becker 5-7, 7-5, 6-4.

Results, page 31

## Unrepentant Francis defends drug programme

By DAVID POWELL

ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

WITH time to spare after his suspension for life, a punishment made public on Tuesday, Charlie Francis, Ben Johnson's former coach, will be in Britain next month to promote his new book, *Speed Trap*.

His ban, which carries the right of appeal after seven years, will have come as no surprise to him. As the book points out, in referring to mitigating factors in any appeal he might make, he was already under an "indefinite suspension", imposed by the Canadian Track and Field Association, the forerunner to Athletics Canada, which has ruled against Francis's involvement in future national or international projects.

In *Speed Trap*, though, he is unrepentant. Johnson, who returns to competition in the Hamilton

### COMMENT

indoor meeting tomorrow, may have returned six negative tests during his two-year suspension for a positive result after his victory in the Seoul Olympic 100 metres, but Francis is scornful of international attempts since then to create a drug-free sport.

"The demonisation of [purge against] steroids has done no one a favour," Francis writes. "If the IOC [International Olympic Committee] and IAAF [International Amateur Athletic Federation] drug policies were designed to protect the athletes' health, they have failed. Rather than inducing people to perform without drugs, the banned list has pushed them... to new substances with harsher side-effects or unknown risks."

"While hard research remains scanty, what we do know suggests that any adverse effects of commercially marketed steroids are minor and mostly reversible, as long as dosages are kept low and durations are limited." Such, Francis claimed, was the approach to Johnson's drugs programme between 1981 and 1988. "Nor are steroids deemed a moral danger by the World Health Organisation. Unfortunately, today's athlete is forced to seek not the safest effective drugs, but the ones that are least detectable," Francis writes.

A longer list of banned substances and random testing outside competition is futile, Francis claims. "The louder the track federations preach disarmament, the greater the proliferation of pharmaceutical weapons," he says. "Doping has been suppressed in modern track and field no better than drinking

was stopped during America's Roaring Twenties."

Francis's justification for leading Johnson towards steroids was "to level the playing field". In other words, so many other athletes were taking drugs, he claims, that he could not win without them. World record-holders and Olympic champions are implicated, but Francis gives no hard evidence. There are several references to a drugs culture in Britain, but he mentions only one athlete by name, never mind any proof of his allegation: "I knew of two British female sprinters who were on 35 milligrams of Dianabol a day [in 1979]."

British officials are preparing to challenge Francis's allegations, now that they are to be published here.

"We do not wish to publicise his book, but if he gives us proof when he comes here we will act upon it," Tony Ward, the British Amateur Athletic Board spokesman, said. "We do not take seriously anything he says."

At the very least, the gaps in Francis's knowledge of the British scene are exposed by his writing. "In the spring of 1990, Sport Canada stiffened its first-offence penalty for a positive steroid test to a four-year suspension — the heaviest sanction in the world." As the pole vaulter, Jeff Guttentag, found out, Britain bans for life any first-time drug-takers.

*Speed Trap* by Charlie Francis with Jeff Coplon, to be published by Grafton Books on February 7 (£14.99).

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